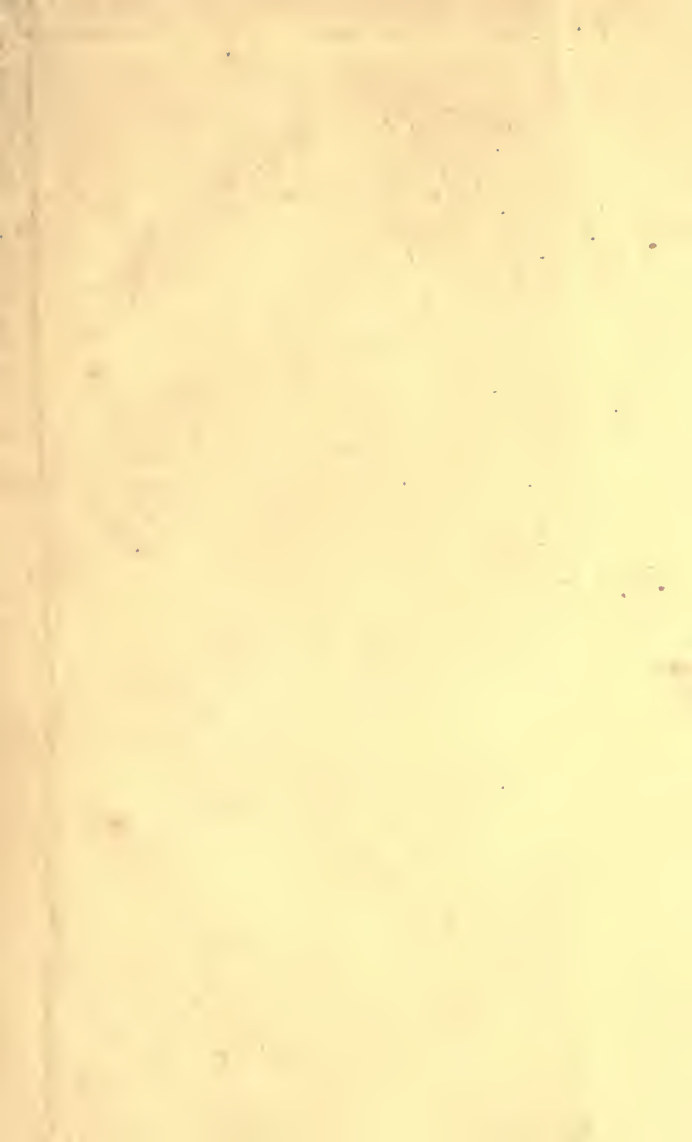


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Robert H. Muir

MUSICAL HISTORY,
BIOGRAPHY, AND CRITICISM.

BY

GEORGE HOGARTH.

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MUSICAL HISTORY.

CHAPTER XIII.

MUSIC IN GERMANY DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY,
CONTINUED.—MOZART.—PLEVEL.

JOHANN CHRYSOSTOM WOLFGANG GOTTLIEB MOZART* was born at Salzburg on the 27th of January, 1756. His father, Leopold Mozart, was a musician of some eminence, and, as well as his wife, Anna Maria Pertl, was remarkable for personal beauty. They had seven children, of whom only two survived, a girl named Mary Anne, and the subject of the present sketch.

When young Mozart was about three years of age, his father began to give his sister, then about seven, lessons on the harpsichord, by which the boy's attention was immediately attracted. His great amusement was to endeavour to find out thirds on the instrument, and nothing could exceed his delight when he discovered them. At the age of four, he had learned to play several minuets, and other little pieces; and before he had attained his fifth year, he had made attempts at composition. At this period he gave signs of a very

* He is frequently called *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*. *Amadeus* is equivalent to *Gottlieb*.

affectionate and sensitive disposition. He would frequently ask the persons about him if they loved him, and an answer in the negative, made in joke, affected him to tears. When he became engrossed by his passion for music, he lost his relish for the usual gambols of children, of which he had been very fond, and cared nothing for any amusement of which music did not form a part. A friend of the family used to amuse himself by playing with the child: they carried playthings in procession from one room to another, marching to a tune, which one of them sang or played on the violin. For a time, Mozart attached himself with great avidity to the ordinary studies of youth, and even sacrificed to them his love for music. While he was learning arithmetic, the tables, chairs, walls, and floors, were scribbled over with figures. Music, however, soon became again his favourite pursuit. His father, returning home one day with a friend, found him earnestly engaged in writing, and asked him what he was about. "I am composing a concerto for the harpsichord," said the child, "and have finished the first part." His father took the paper, and looked at it along with his friend. Seeing nothing but a childish-looking scrawl, almost illegible, and covered with blots of ink, they began to laugh; but the father, continuing to examine it, became filled with astonishment and pleasure. "Look," he cried to his friend, "how correct and regular it is! but it is too difficult; nobody could play it." "It is a concerto," said the young composer, "and must be studied before it can be played: see, this is the way it goes." He then began to play, but could only make a shift to give an idea of

his meaning. The composition consisted of a multitude of notes, placed precisely according to rule, but presenting such difficulties that no performer could have ever been able to execute them.

In the year 1762, when Mozart was six years of age, his father carried his family to Vienna, where the two children performed before Francis the First and the Imperial court. Wagenseil, an eminent musician, was then in Vienna; and Mozart, who already knew how to value the approbation of a good master, begged that he might be present. The emperor sent for Wagenseil, and gave up to him his place beside the harpsichord. "Sir," said the young performer, "I am going to play one of your concertos; and you will turn the leaves for me."

When the family returned to Salzburg, Mozart brought with him a small violin, with which he amused himself. An able violin player, of the name of Wenzl, called one day on his father, to ask his opinion of six trios he had just composed. They proceeded to try them, Wenzl himself playing the first violin, Mozart's father the bass, and a performer of the name of Schachner the second violin. Young Mozart begged hard to be allowed to play this last part, but his father angrily refused his request, naturally conceiving it to be a childish whim. At last, however, on the good-humoured intercession of Schachner, the child was allowed to play along with him on his little violin, and cautioned by his father to make little noise. In a few minutes Schachner, nodding to his companions, quietly laid down his instrument, and Mozart went on alone, playing his part with the utmost accuracy and

steadiness, to the admiration and astonishment of the party.

The delicacy of his ear was wonderful. He could distinguish the slightest difference in the pitch of sound; and every false or harsh tone, not softened by some concord, gave him exquisite pain. He had an invincible horror at the sound of a trumpet, when not played in concert with other instruments. His father imagined he might cure this dislike by sounding a trumpet in his presence, and tried the experiment, notwithstanding the child's intreaties; but at the first blast he became pale, and fell on the floor. He was fond of playing on Schachner's violin, on account of the sweetness of its tone, and Schachner used to tune it, and leave it with him. One day, when Schachner came to visit his father, Mozart remarked to him, that the last time he had tuned his violin, he had not kept it at its former pitch. "It is half a quarter of a tone," he said, "lower than this one of mine." They at first laughed at this extreme exactness; but the father, who had often observed the extraordinary delicacy of his son's ear, and his memory for sounds, desired him to bring Schachner's violin, and it actually proved to be half a quarter of a tone below the other.

Though this wonderful child could not fail to perceive the admiration and astonishment which his talents excited, he did not become vain or forward. He was always docile and gentle, and never appeared out of humour with the commands of his parents; even when he had practised music the whole day, he would continue to play, without the slightest impatience, if his father desired him to do so.

In July, 1763, when Mozart was in his seventh year, the family set out on an extensive journey. After visiting the different German courts, they arrived at Paris, where they remained for several months. The public performances of the children were received with enthusiasm, and Mozart played the organ in the Royal Chapel at Versailles before the court. It was at Paris that he composed and published his first two sonatas. In April, 1764, the family went to London, where they remained for more than a year. The children were received with the same applause as at Paris, both by the court and the public. Some of the most difficult pieces of Sebastian Bach, Handel, and other masters, were placed before Mozart, who performed them at sight with the greatest accuracy. On one occasion, in presence of the king, he played a very melodious and beautiful piece from a bass that was put before him. On another occasion, John Christian Bach, music-master to the queen, took the boy on his knees, and played a few bars; Mozart continued, and thus they went on, alternately, through an entire sonata, with such unity of effect, that those who did not see them thought that one person only was playing.

During Mozart's stay in England he was particularly noticed by the Honourable Daines Barrington, who has recorded several remarkable traits of his precocity. In one of his visits to the young musician, Mr. Barrington brought with him a manuscript duet, the words of which were from Metastasio's opera of *Demofoonte*. The score, beside the two voice parts, (which were in the counter-tenor clef,) contained accompaniments for

two violins and a bass. This score was no sooner placed before Mozart than he began to play the symphony in a masterly manner, and in the precise time intended by the composer. He then began to sing the upper voice part, leaving the other to his father. His voice was thin and infantine, but his style and expression were admirable. The father having made one or two mistakes, was instantly reproved and set right by his son. While he was thus singing his own part and attending to his father's, he was also playing the accompaniment from the instrumental score. When he had finished the piece, he appeared delighted with it, and asked Mr. Barrington if he had brought any more such music. Mr. Barrington then requested him to sing an extempore love-song, after the manner of Manzoli, the celebrated singer, who was then in England, and by whom the boy had been much caressed. He complied instantly, and, looking back archly, began a recitative proper for such a song. He played the symphony, and sang an air, on the single word *affetto*, which had a first and second part, and was of the ordinary length of an opera song. Mr. Barrington then asked him to give a *song of rage*, in the style of the serious opera. He immediately began a proper recitative, and, after a symphony, sang an air on the word *perfido*. Before he got through it, his imagination became so excited, that, in place of playing, he beat the harpsichord, and sometimes started from his chair in the tempest of rage he was describing. After this he played a little sonata that he had composed the day before, in which his execution was wonderful, considering that his little fingers could scarcely reach a sixth on the instrument. He appeared

to have a thorough knowledge of the fundamental rules of composition, as, on Mr. Barrington giving him a melody, he immediately wrote an excellent bass to it. He showed, too, great skill in extemporaneous modulation, making smooth and effective transitions from one key to another; and he executed these musical difficulties, for a considerable time, with a handkerchief over the keys. With all these displays of genius, however, which were such as to make Mr. Barrington doubtful as to his age, his general deportment was that of a child. While he was playing to Mr. Barrington one day, his favourite cat came in, on which he immediately left the harpsichord to play with it, and could not be brought back for some time. He had hardly resumed his performance when he suddenly started off again, and began running about the room with a stick between his legs for a horse.

During his residence in England, he composed six sonatas, which were dedicated to the queen, and published in London. These pieces are preserved among his works; and, though exceedingly simple in construction, they show that "the child was father to the man," as they contain innumerable traits of the same kind of melody and expression which distinguish the productions of his riper years.

After an absence of more than three years, the family returned to Salzburg, in November, 1766; and Mozart, living tranquilly at home, devoted himself with ardour to the study of composition. Emanuel Bach, Hasse, and Handel, were his principal guides, though he by no means neglected the study of the old Italian masters.

In 1768 Mozart performed at Vienna before the emperor Joseph the Second, who ordered him to compose the music of a comic opera, the *Finta Semplice*. It was approved by Hasse and by Metastasio, but its performance was prevented by a cabal among the singers. At the consecration of the new church of the Orphans, he composed the music of the service, and conducted the performance of it in the presence of the Imperial court, though then but a child of twelve years old.

He returned to pass the year 1769 at Salzburg. In the end of that year his father took him to Italy, where he was received with the enthusiasm which might be expected from a people so much alive to excellence in the fine arts. At Milan he received a commission to compose the opera for the carnival of the following year. At Bologna he found a warm admirer in the celebrated Padre Martini, who was delighted to see a boy of thirteen develop all the subjects of fugue which he himself proposed, and play them with the utmost readiness and precision. At Florence he became acquainted with Thomas Linley, the son of the celebrated composer of *The Duenna*, and himself afterwards a very distinguished musician. Linley was then a boy of about Mozart's age, and a pupil of Martini. Their friendship became so warm, that when Mozart left Florence, they parted with mutual tears.

When he arrived at Rome, Ganganelli, who then filled the pontifical chair, invited him to the Quirinal palace, where he had the honour of performing privately before his holiness. This was just before Easter. In the course of the conversation, the approaching per-

formances in the Sistine chapel were spoken of, particularly the famous *Miserere* of Allegri. Mozart, with the *naïveté* of his age, requested a copy from the pope, which he declined giving, explaining, in kind terms, that compliance was out of his power, because the piece was forbidden to be copied under pain of excommunication. The young musician, however, obtained permission to attend the single rehearsal which preceded the public performance. He listened with the most earnest attention; and, on quitting the chapel, hastened home and wrote down the notes. At the public performance he had the manuscript concealed in his hat; and having filled up some omissions, and corrected some errors in the inner parts, he had the satisfaction to know that he possessed the treasure so jealously watched. The next time he was invited to play before the pope, he ventured to mention what he had done, and produced the manuscript. The pope listened with amazement, but said with a smile, "The prohibition cannot extend to the memory, and I think you may escape the penalty of excommunication." This composition, afterwards published from a copy sent as a present from Pope Pius the Sixth to the emperor of Germany, was compared with the manuscript of Mozart, and it was found that there was not the difference of a single note.

From Rome, Mozart went to Naples, where he played in public in so astonishing a manner, that the audience took it into their heads that there was some charm in a brilliant ring which he wore; and he was absolutely obliged to take it off in order to convince them that it had no share in the wonders he was performing. He

now returned to Milan, in order to fulfil his engagement of producing an opera in the carnival; and, in travelling by the way of Rome and Bologna, he was made, by the pope, a Knight of the Golden Spur, and elected a member of the Philharmonic Society of the latter city, the highest distinction that a musician can receive in Italy.

In December, 1770, his opera of *Mithridate* was brought out at Milan, and performed for twenty nights. In consequence of this success, the manager entered into an engagement with him for the composition of the first opera for the year 1773. The opera *Lucio Silla* was equally successful with *Mithridate*, having been performed twenty-six times successively. In the intermediate period between the production of these two pieces, he composed in 1771, *Ascanio in Alba*, at Milan, and *Il Sogno di Scipione*, in 1772, at Salzburg.

Dr. Burney, who spent this year, 1772, in Germany, thus writes of Mozart, in his account of his tour:—
“The Mozart family were all at Salzburg last Summer. The father has long been in the service of that court, and the son is now one of the band. He composed an opera at Milan for the marriage of the archduke with the princess of Modena, and was to compose another at the same place for the carnival of this year, though he is now but sixteen years of age. By a letter from Salzburg, dated last November, I am informed that this young man, who so much astonished all Europe by his premature knowledge and performance during infancy, is still a great master of his instrument. My correspondent went to his father’s house, to hear him and his

* *State of Music in Germany*, vol. ii.

sister play duets on the same harpsichord ; but she is now at her summit, which is not marvellous ; ‘and,’ says the writer of the letter, ‘if I may judge of the music which I heard of his composition in the orchestra, *he is one further instance of early fruit being more extraordinary than excellent !*’” This remark, now absolutely ludicrous, was foolish even at the time it was made ; and Dr. Burney, who was just returned from the scenes of Mozart’s triumphs, ought to have known better than to adopt it.

During excursions which he made to Vienna and Munich in 1773, Mozart produced several compositions which were highly esteemed, among which were the opera of *La Finta Giardiniera*, and several masses for the chapel of the elector of Bavaria. In 1775, on the occasion of the Archduke Maximilian spending a short time at Salzburg, Mozart composed the cantata, *Il Re Pastore*.

Mozart’s reputation had now spread throughout Europe, and he was desirous to establish himself in some place where he could gain an independence by his talents. His father suggested Paris ; and he set out for that city, accompanied by his mother only, in the year 1777. In his way towards Paris he remained for some time at Munich, in hopes of obtaining there some permanent employment worthy of him. He received much admiration, and many compliments from the noble patrons of music in that city ; but when he pressed them on the subject of his affairs, he met with nothing but shuffling and evasion. At one time he was told that there was no place vacant ; at another, that he was too young, and ought to go to Italy,—a remark which he was well entitled to feel as an insult, considering the

length of his previous residence in that country, the works he had composed while there, the manner of their reception, and the honours that were everywhere paid him. At Augsburg, Manheim, and other places through which he passed, he gained some money by performing in public and private. In a letter to his father, written from Augsburg, he says, "My best regards to my dear father, and many thanks for his remembrance of me on my birthday. Let him feel no uneasiness on my account. I never lose sight of my God. I acknowledge his power and fear his anger; but, at the same time, love to admire his goodness and mercy towards his creatures. He will never abandon his servant; by the fulfilment of his will, my desires are satisfied; so I can want nothing, and ought to live happily. I shall always make it my duty to follow punctually the commands and counsels which you may have the goodness to give me." In the Spring of 1778, he arrived in Paris, where he laboured hard to recommend himself, by his compositions and performances, to the favour of the aristocracy and the public. But he was treated with contumelious neglect by the great, and every effort was made by jealous rivals to prevent or mar the performance of his music. He was disgusted, too, with the wretched taste which then prevailed in the French capital. "You write me," he says to his father, "to pay many visits, in order to make new acquaintances and renew the old; but this is not possible beyond a certain point. The distances are too great, and the streets too dirty for walking; and in a coach one has the pleasure of spending an enormous sum in a single day, which is pure loss, for here the people pay you a great many compliments, but nothing else. They request me to visit them on such a day; I

play. They exclaim, *O, he is a prodigy ! inconceivable ! amazing !*—then ‘Adieu,’ and that is all. I have already spent a great deal of money in coaches, and very often for *not* meeting people. Paris is much changed. The French are not nearly so polite as they were fifteen years ago ; at present they verge very nearly on grossness.” He afterwards says, “If there were in this place any one possessed of ears to hear, a heart to feel, and the slightest idea of music, I should console myself for all these vexations. But I am among brute-beasts as regards music. I am here, however, and must submit. God grant that I may come out with a pure and healthy taste ! I pray every day to the Eternal to grant me courage, that I may do honour to myself and to Germany,—that I may earn money, and be enabled to relieve you from your present distressed state. When shall we meet again, and live happily together ?” Weary of this painful and unprofitable life, Mozart left Paris in 1779, and returned to Salzburg.

In the following year he repaired to Vienna; and soon afterwards composed his opera of *Idomeneo*. He had become passionately attached to Mademoiselle Constance Weber, a celebrated actress ; but her parents were opposed to their union, on account of the young man’s unsettled situation in life. He was desirous to show her family, by this work, that he possessed, in his own talents, the means of honourable independence ; and, stimulated at once by love and ambition, he produced a piece which he always ranked among the best of his works.

During the remainder of his life, Mozart remained at Vienna, attached to the service of the emperor.

Though he was by no means liberally treated, he refused many more advantageous offers made him by different sovereigns, and particularly by the king of Prussia. In one of his visits to Berlin, that monarch offered him three thousand crowns a year if he would engage to superintend his orchestra. But he declined the offer, saying, "Ought I to leave my good emperor?" When one of his friends reproached him for his imprudence in rejecting so good an offer, he replied, "I like to live at Vienna, the emperor is kind to me, and I don't value money." Some vexation he met with at court, however, once induced him to beg his dismissal; but a word from the emperor made him give up his design. He was not worldly enough to take advantage of this favourable opportunity of demanding a settled salary; but this was afterwards fixed by the emperor himself at the incredibly small sum of eight hundred florins, about eighty pounds sterling; and this paltry allowance was never augmented.

The opera of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (The Escape from the Seraglio) was brought out in 1782. At one of the rehearsals, the emperor said to the composer, "My dear Mozart, this is too fine for our ears; there are too many notes."—"I beg your majesty's pardon," said Mozart; "there are just as many as there should be." The emperor said nothing; but applauded the piece warmly when it came to be performed. The emperor, however, was not entirely in the wrong. Mozart himself afterwards said, after playing over one of the airs which had been most applauded, "This is very well for a room, but too verbose for the theatre. When I composed this opera I took delight in what I

was doing, and never thought anything too long." He made many corrections and retrenchments on the piece ; but even in its present shape, notwithstanding its many and great beauties, the airs are more lengthened and fuller of passages of display, than those of his later operas.

Le Nozze di Figaro and *Don Giovanni* were composed in 1787, and were performed at Prague with the most brilliant success. Neither of these operas, however, was at first very favourably received at Vienna. *Le Nozze di Figaro* was wilfully spoiled by the singers, at the instigation, it is said, of rival composers ; and the Viennese public, at that time, were incapable of appreciating a work so novel in its style as *Don Giovanni*. Its merits were one day discussed in a large party, at which most of the connoisseurs of the place were present, and Haydn among the rest. They all agreed in speaking of it in terms of high general praise, but everybody had some fault to find with it. Haydn remained silent till he was called upon for his opinion. "I cannot give a judgment, gentlemen, upon all these objections you have started," said he ; "all I know is, that Mozart is certainly the greatest composer living." The critics looked foolish, and ventured upon no further remarks. Mozart always spoke in a similar manner of Haydn. A composer who stood high enough to have some title to be envious of Haydn, used to tease Mozart by pointing out to him, with great satisfaction, any little negligences or errors he had discovered in Haydn's new compositions. Mozart bore this for a while, and always endeavoured to get rid of the subject ; but at last, his patience becoming exhausted, he said very abruptly, "Sir,

if you and I were melted down together, we should not furnish materials for one Haydn." Mozart inscribed his first book of quartets to Haydn, in a brief dedication, remarkable for its simple elegance of expression.

During the last years of Mozart's life, his health, which had always been delicate, rapidly declined. He became morbidly apprehensive of death, and of the unprotected state in which he should leave his family, whom he tenderly loved. Under the influence of such feelings, he used to labour with such unremitting industry, that, in the midst of his exertions, his strength failed him, and he was sometimes carried fainting to bed. It was evident that he was destroying himself by this immoderate application. His wife and his friends endeavoured to divert his mind and withdraw him from his painful thoughts by getting him to join them in visits and little excursions: but he remained absent, abstracted, and sunk in melancholy reflection; and he only recovered his energy when he returned to his labours, and became absorbed in his grand and beautiful conceptions. Sometimes, too, he endeavoured to get rid of his painful thoughts of the future, by a reckless enjoyment of the passing hour. But he was never of dissolute habits; and his thoughtless extravagance, the occasional rebound of an elastic spirit from its state of diseased and almost insane depression, is more to be regretted than made a matter of reproach.

His exemplary wife, ever indefatigable in her anxiety for his health and comfort, used to get the friends whose society he most enjoyed, to pretend to surprise him at times when, after many hours' application, he ought to have been at rest: but though their visits

pleased him, he did not lay aside his pen ; they generally failed in their attempts to engage him in conversation, and he soon went on with his writing, apparently unaware of their presence.

In this melancholy state of mind he composed the operas of the *Zauberflöte* (Magic Flute) and the *Clemenza di Tito*, and also the *Requiem*, or Mass for the Dead. It was while writing the first of these operas that he was seized with fainting fits. The *Zauberflöte* met with an enthusiastic reception from the public ; but the state of the composer's health did not allow him to conduct the orchestra for more than nine or ten representations. When he was no longer able to go to the theatre, he used to lay his watch by his side and follow, in imagination, the progress of the performance. "Now," he would say, "the first act is over,—now they are singing such an air ;" and then, the recollection that it was the decay of his own strength that compelled him to sit inactive at home, would bring back all his gloomy anticipations of approaching dissolution.

The celebrated *Requiem* was the last of his works. One day, it is said, he received a visit from a stranger, apparently of some consideration, who said that a person of rank, who had lost a dear relative, was desirous of commemorating that event by the performance of a solemn service, for which he requested Mozart to compose a *Requiem*. Mozart engaged to execute the work in a month ; and, on the stranger desiring to know the price he set upon it, mentioned a hundred ducats, which the visiter laid upon the table, and disappeared. Mozart remained lost in thought for some time ; he then suddenly called for pen, ink, and paper, and in

spite of his wife's entreaties, began to write. For several days he wrote day and night with unabated ardour; but his feeble constitution was unable to support such efforts. One morning he fell down senseless, and was obliged to suspend his labour. Some days after, when his wife was endeavouring to divert him from his gloomy forebodings, he said to her, "I am certain that I am writing this *Requiem* for myself,—it will be my funeral service;" and it was impossible to remove this impression from his mind. As he went on, he felt his strength diminish from day to day, and the score advanced slowly. At the month's end, the stranger again appeared, and asked for the *Requiem*. Mozart said he had found himself unable to keep his word, and requested another month; adding that the work had interested him more than he had expected, and that he had extended it beyond his original design. "In that case," said the stranger, "it is but just to increase the remuneration; here are fifty ducats more." Mozart, in astonishment, begged to know who he was; but this information he declined to communicate, but said he should return in a month. Mozart called one of his servants, and ordered him to follow this extraordinary personage, and endeavour to find out who he was; but the servant returned without being able to trace him. Poor Mozart, in a state of mind at once enfeebled and excited, imagined that the stranger was some supernatural being, sent to warn him of his approaching end, and applied himself to the *Requiem* with greater ardour than ever. During his labour, he was seized with frequent fainting fits, and reduced to the most extreme debility. On the day of his death,

he desired the score to be brought to his bed. "Was I not right," he said to his afflicted wife, "when I assured you that it was for myself that I was composing this *Requiem*?" At the end of the month the stranger returned, and found that the work was still unfinished; but its author was no more.

The *Requiem* was afterwards completed by Sussmayer, a composer of considerable eminence, who was a friend of Mozart's family. The circumstances under which this work was composed, and the state in which it was when Mozart's pen was arrested by death, have occasioned, at different times, a good deal of controversy in Germany; but the matter has not been fully cleared up. In the year 1827, an edition of the *Requiem* was published by André, a respectable music-publisher at Offenbach, the preface to which contains all the information on the subject that can now be obtained. From M. André's statements it would appear, that the person by whom Mozart was employed to compose this work, was a Count Waldseck, who, having lost his wife, took it into his head not to obtain, but to pretend to compose, a *Requiem* to her memory; that he determined to procure a composition of which the reputed authorship would do him credit; and that his steward was Mozart's mysterious visitant. M. André's evidence amounts to a presumption, and nothing more, that this might have been the case; but the truth will now probably never be ascertained.‡

After Mozart's death, his widow begged Sussmayer to examine and put in order his manuscripts, which were in great confusion; and the unfinished *Requiem* being found among them, she requested him to com-

plete it, which he accordingly did. It appears from a letter written by her to M. André, in answer to some inquiries made by him, that the movements from the beginning down to the *Dies iræ* were completed by Mozart; but that, of the subsequent movements, *viz.*, the *Dies iræ*, the *Tuba mirum spargens sonum*, the *Rex tremendæ majestatis*, the *Recordare*, and the *Confutatis*, Mozart had made only a sketch or outline, consisting of the principal voice parts, with indications of the most prominent effects in the instrumental accompaniments; and that the voice parts had been filled up, and the instrumental score completed, by Sussmayer. In M. André's edition, he has distinguished as far as possible, by means of marks, the original work of Mozart from Sussmayer's additions.

It is deeply to be regretted, that Mozart was prevented from completing this most pathetic and impressive of all his productions. No unpleasant feeling of uncertainty, indeed, can subsist as to its entire authenticity; because, independently of all other proof, the music itself furnishes internal evidence that every idea it contains flowed from the mind of Mozart himself, and that what remained to be done consisted of *remplissage*,—a task which a skilful musician could execute in precise conformity with the clearly indicated intentions of the author. But had he lived, he would have given the work a conclusion worthy of its greatness, the want of which has rendered it necessary to finish by a repetition of the opening movement with different words.

Mozart died on the 5th of December, 1791, before he had completed his thirty-sixth year. With many

weaknesses, his character appears to have been singularly interesting. He was "In wit a man, simplicity a child." He was a man, not only in the gifts which raised him to the summit of excellence in his art, but in some of the noblest qualities of human nature ; while he was a child in relation to that worldly wisdom without which no man can safely tread the dangerous paths of human life. His health was always delicate; he was thin and pale, and appeared never to have reached his natural growth. In his face there was nothing remarkable but the variety of expression it assumed, according to the feelings which affected him at the moment ; nor was there anything extraordinary in his habits, if we except his extreme fondness for the game of billiards. From his earliest years his whole mind was so engrossed with musical ideas, that he never acquired the knowledge of the world requisite for transacting the most ordinary business. His fixing his affections on the admirable woman whom he married, was the wisest act, as it was the happiest event, of his life. Constance Weber was his guide, his mistress, his guardian angel. She regulated his domestic establishment, managed his affairs, was the cheerful companion of his happier hours, and his never-failing consolation in sickness and despondency. He passionately loved her, and evinced his feelings by the most tender and delicate attentions. Her health, like his own, was precarious. During a long illness which she had, he used always to meet the friends who came to visit her with his finger on his lips, to caution them against noise ; and so much did this gesture become a habit with him, that, long after her recovery, he used

to meet his friends with his finger on his lips, and address them in a whisper. It was his practice to ride out early in the morning ; and, while her illness continued, he used to leave a note upon her pillow, folded like a physician's prescription, and containing some little affectionate message or advice.

Mozart was utterly incapable of meanness or duplicity of any sort. He was frank and candid in the expression of his sentiments, and as prompt and liberal in acknowledging merit as he was decided in exposing arrogant pretension, jealousy, or envy. He was, too, disinterested and benevolent in the highest degree, and the extreme kindness of his nature was grossly abused by artful performers, music-sellers, and managers of theatres. Whenever any poor artists, strangers in Vienna, applied to him for assistance, he offered them the use of his house and table, introduced them to the persons whom he thought could be of use to them, and frequently composed for their use concertos, of which he did not even keep a copy, in order that they might have the exclusive advantage of playing them. But, not content with this, they sold these pieces to music-publishers ; and thus repaid his kindness by robbing him. He seldom received any recompense for his piano-forte compositions, but generally wrote them for his friends, who were, of course, anxious to possess some work of his for their own use, and suited to their powers of playing. Artaria, a music-seller of Vienna, and other members of the trade, contrived to get possession of many of these pieces, and published them, without obtaining the author's consent, or making him any remuneration for them. A Polish count, who was

invited to a concert at Mozart's house, heard a quintet performed for the first time, with which he was so greatly delighted that he asked Mozart to compose for him a trio for the flute. Mozart agreed, on condition that he should do it at his own time. The count next day sent a polite note, expressive of his thanks for pleasure he had enjoyed, and, along with it, one hundred gold demi-sovereigns (about 100*l.* sterling). Mozart immediately sent him the original score of the quintet that had pleased him so much. The count returned to Vienna a year afterwards, and, calling upon Mozart, inquired for the trio. Mozart said that he had never found himself in a disposition to write anything worthy of his acceptance. "Perhaps, then," said the count, "you may find yourself in a disposition to return me the hundred demi-sovereigns I paid you beforehand." Mozart instantly handed him the money, but the count said not a word about the quintet; and the composer soon afterwards had the satisfaction of seeing it published by Artaria, arranged as a quartet, for the piano-forte, violin, tenor, and violoncello. Mozart's quintets for wind instruments, published also as piano-forte quartets, are among the most charming and popular of his instrumental compositions for the chamber; and this anecdote is a specimen of the manner in which he lost the benefit he ought to have derived, even from his finest works. The opera of the *Zauberflöte* was composed for the purpose of relieving the distresses of a manager, who had been ruined by unsuccessful speculations, and came to implore his assistance. Mozart gave him the score without price, with full permission to perform it in his own theatre, and for

his own benefit ; only stipulating that he was not to give a copy to any one, in order that the author might afterwards be enabled to dispose of the copyright. The manager promised strict compliance with the condition. The opera was brought out, filled his theatre and his pockets, and, some short time afterwards, appeared at five or six different theatres, by means of copies received from the grateful manager.

Notwithstanding the indefatigable ardour with which Mozart used to write at those times when his mind was strongly engaged in his work, at other times he would give himself up to indolence, and often procrastinated the completion of a piece till the moment of performance was at hand. On such occasions he got out of the scrape, sometimes by working with surprising rapidity, and at other times by trusting to his powers of memory, and playing a piece without having written it down. The celebrated overture to *Don Giovanni* was entirely written during the night previous to the first performance of the opera, after he had spent the day in the fatiguing occupation of conducting the general rehearsal. He began his task about eleven o'clock at night, having got his wife to make him some punch, and to sit by him to keep him awake. He wrote while she ransacked her memory for the fairy tales of her youth, and all the humorous and amusing stories she could think of. As long as she kept him laughing till the tears ran down his cheeks, he got on rapidly, but if she was silent for a moment, he dropped asleep. Seeing, at last, that he could hold out no longer, she persuaded him to lie down for a couple of hours. At five in the morning

she awoke him, and at seven, when the copyists appeared, the score was completed. There was barely time to write out the necessary number of parts, and the overture was performed without any rehearsal,—a thing which, in those days, could have been done nowhere but in Germany.

It has always been said that this overture was *composed* during the night before its first performance; but Mozart was not in the habit of composing with the pen in his hand. His practice was, not merely to form in his mind a sketch, or outline, of a piece of music, but to work it up and complete it in all its parts; and it was not till this was done that he committed it to paper, which he did with rapidity, even when surrounded by his friends and joining in their conversation. There can be no doubt, that the overture to *Don Giovanni* existed, fully formed in his mind, when he sat down to write it the night before its performance; and even then, his producing, with such rapidity, a score for so many instruments, and so rich in harmony and contrivance, indicates a strength of conception, and a power of memory altogether wonderful. He himself has given an interesting account of his method of composition in a letter to one of his friends, a noble amateur, of which a translation from the original manuscript, in the possession of Mr. Moscheles, is published in the *Harmonicon* for November, 1825. The whole letter is full of delightful simplicity, and gives a very favourable impression both of the head and heart of the writer.

“You say you should like to know my way of composing, and what method I follow in writing works of

some extent. I can really say no more upon this subject than the following,—for I myself know no more about it, and cannot account for it. When I am, as it were, completely myself, entirely alone, and of good cheer,—say travelling in a carriage, or walking after a good meal, or during the night when I cannot sleep,—it is on such occasions that my ideas flow best and most abundantly. *Whence* and *how* they come, I know not, nor can I force them. Those ideas that please me I retain in memory, and I am accustomed, as I have been told, to hum them to myself. If I continue in this way, it soon occurs to me how I may turn this or that morsel to account, so as to make a good dish of it,—that is to say, agreeably to the rules of counterpoint, the peculiarities of the different instruments, &c. All this fires my soul; and, provided I am not disturbed, my subject enlarges itself, becomes methodized and defined, and the whole, though it be long, stands almost finished and complete in my mind, so that I can survey it, like a fine picture or a beautiful statue, at a glance. Nor do I hear in my imagination the parts *successively*, but I hear them, as it were, all at once. The delight this gives me I cannot express. All this inventing, this producing, takes place, as it were, in a pleasing, lively dream; still the actual hearing of the *tout ensemble* is, after all, the best. What has been thus produced I do not easily forget; and this is, perhaps, the best gift I have my Divine Maker to thank for.

“When I proceed to write down my ideas, I take out of the bag of my memory, if I may use that phrase, what has previously been collected into it in the way I

have mentioned: for this reason, the committing to paper is done quickly enough, for everything, as I said before, is already finished; and it rarely differs on paper from what it was in my imagination. At this occupation I can, therefore, suffer myself to be disturbed; for, whatever may be going on around me, still I write, and even talk on trifling matters. But why productions take from my hand that particular form and style which makes them *Mozartish*, and different from the works of other composers, is probably owing to the same cause which renders my nose so-and-so, large, or aquiline, or, in short, makes it Mozart's, and different from those of other people; for I really do not study to aim at any originality. I should, in fact, not be able to describe in what mine consists; though I think it quite natural, that persons who have really an individual appearance of their own, are also differently organized from others, both externally and internally. Let this suffice, and never, my best friend, never trouble me again with such subjects."

A celebrated female performer on the violin being in Vienna in the year 1786, solicited Mozart to compose a piece for their joint performance at her concert. With his characteristic good-nature he agreed to do so, and accordingly composed and arranged, in his mind, his well known sonata for the piano-forte and violin, in B flat, esteemed one of the finest of his works of this class. But the day of the concert approached, and the lady, full of anxiety, endeavoured, without effect, to get him to commit it to paper; it was only the evening before the concert that he sent her the violin part. The concert was attended by the court, and all the rank and

fashion of Vienna. The sonata began ; the performance of both artists was perfect, and the audience in raptures. But there was one personage in the room whose enjoyment exceeded that of all the rest of the audience,—it was the Emperor Joseph the Second, who, in his box over the heads of the performers, was able, by means of his opera-glass, to see that Mozart had nothing before him but a sheet of blank paper. At the end of the piece, the emperor beckoned Mozart to his box, and said to him, in a half-whisper, “So, Mozart, you have once more trusted to chance !”—“Yes, Sire,” answered the composer, with a smile of mingled triumph and confusion. Had he previously played over the piece along with the lady, this feat would not have been so very wonderful, even though he had not written down the piano-forte part, but he had never once heard it along with the violin.

Among his most favourite composers were Porpora, Durante, Leo, and Alessandro Scarlatti ; and a comparison of his scores with those of Gluck shows how much he had studied the works of that great master : but he placed Handel above all other musicians. “Of all of us,” he was wont to say, “Handel understands best how to produce a great effect ; when he chooses, he can strike like a thunderbolt.” He was not given to talking of his own works ; but, among his operas, he gave the preference to *Idomeneo* and *Don Giovanni*.

Notwithstanding his good-nature, his well-known delicacy of ear, and power of detecting the most minute errors, made the performers very much afraid of singing his music in his presence. In one of his visits to Berlin he arrived in the evening, and found, on inquiry

at the inn, that his *Entführung aus dem Serail* was the opera that night at the theatre. He immediately repaired thither, and placed himself at the entrance of the pit, that he might listen without being observed. But he was sometimes so much pleased, and other times so much provoked, by the performance, that he insensibly got close behind the orchestra, continually expressing his pleasure or disapprobation pretty audibly. At last they came to an alteration which had been made in one of his airs, at which, unable to restrain himself, he called out to the orchestra that it ought to be played in a different manner. Everybody began to stare at the man in a great coat, who was making all this noise. Some person in the orchestra recognised him, and in a moment the performers were told that Mozart was in the theatre. There was a general panic on the stage, and some of the fugitives were so frightened, that they could not be prevailed upon to return till Mozart went behind the scenes, and succeeded, by good-humoured compliments, in restoring their confidence, and getting them to go on with the piece.

Mozart's works consist of Italian and German operas, masses, and other compositions for the church, and symphonies, quintets, quartets, sonatas, concertos, and other instrumental pieces.

Of his operas, nine were composed to Italian words ; — *La Finta Semplice*, *Mithridate*, *Lucio Silla*, *La Giardiniera*, *Idomeneo*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte*, and *La Clemenza di Tito*. He wrote only three German operas, the *Entführung aus dem Serail*, the *Schauspiel-director*, and the *Zauberflöte*.

Mozart was the founder of a school of dramatic music, to which every composer who has flourished since his time may be considered as belonging. Its chief peculiarity consists in the fulness of the orchestral parts; and hence it has been called, by M. Choron and others, the *dramatic symphony*. In the operas of Mozart, the accompaniments, even of the airs, display a richness of harmony, and a variety in the combinations of the different instruments, previously unexampled; while, during the long finales and other concerted pieces, in which the most animated and busy scenes of the piece are carried on, the music of the orchestra consists of a series of movements which are written and played in the symphony style, and, instead of accompanying, are accompanied by, the performers on the stage, who carry on the dialogue in a succession of vocal phrases written *upon* the instrumental symphony, while their motions are regulated by its time. This method, when used with the exquisite skill and judgment of Mozart himself, was found to be not only delightful to the ear, but quite consistent with the proper rapidity and freedom of dramatic action. In his operas, even while the orchestra is in the full career of a symphonic movement, the vocal phrases given to the singers are so well separated from each other, so distinctly marked and easily enunciated, so well accented, emphatic, and expressive, that they stand out, as it were, in strong relief from the instrumental ground of the picture, and can be expressed by the performers without constraint or injury to the spirit and effect of the scene. This method, accordingly, was so attractive, that its universal adoption has made all the older music

of the stage appear meagre and unsatisfactory; and modern audiences will hardly listen with patience even to the masterpieces of Gluck, Piccini, or Paesiello;—an unhappy, but necessary consequence of the ceaseless changes to which every description of music—save the highest of all—is liable. By the more immediate followers of Mozart in Germany, Italy, France, and England,—Winter, Mayer, Cimarosa, Mehul, Cherubini, and Storace,—this application of symphonic composition to the stage was kept within Mozart's own bounds; but, more recently, the orchestra has been assuming a more and more prominent position. Even in the hands of the greatest masters of the present day, it is frequently allowed to gain an undue ascendancy, at the expense of the vocal performers; and, in the most fashionable productions of the living Italian composers, the singers can only, by means of bellowing and screaming, contrive to be heard amidst the “pitiless storm” which rages in the orchestra.

Mozart, though eminently original in his ideas, was indebted, in his dramatic music, to the best models then existing. Like Gluck, he discarded the conventional rules as to the length and construction of the airs, and followed no guide but the expression of sentiment and the production of dramatic effect; while he gained from the Italian school a melody, the phrases of which are more flowing, round, and extended, than those of Gluck. This, however, relates only to the form of his music; its substance was his own. His divine airs and ravishing harmonies sprang from the inexhaustible fountain of his own heart, and were the language given him by nature to express the feelings and emotions

with which that heart overflowed. But his power of musical expression was limited by the range of those feelings. He could make his listeners sigh, or weep, or tremble; he could dissolve them in tenderness, or fill them with awe; because such emotions were familiar to his own mind. He could inspire tranquillity and cheerfulness, but seldom gaiety, and never mirth. He could raise a smile, but not laughter. He has written comic operas, but their comedy lies in their subjects, their situations, or their dialogues, not in their music. In his *Figaro*, for example, we find hardly a trait of the light-hearted, quaint, grotesque Spanish barber, drawn by the original French dramatist, and so faithfully rendered by Rossini. Figaro laughs at his master while he foils his designs; but Mozart gives the character quite a different air, and by throwing into it considerable dignity and passion, makes it interesting instead of comic. In all the comic pieces of Mozart, there is not a single air which speaks the language of comedy without the aid of words, like the "Se fiato in corpo avete" of Cimarosa, or the "Largo al factotum" of Rossini. The song in *Don Giovanni*, "Madamina, catalogo è questo," sung by *Leporello*, the valet, is in the style of the broadest comedy; but let it be sung without words or comic gestures, and a person unacquainted with it might suppose it to express impetuous passion, melting into the softest tenderness. The passages in which Mozart is really comic, occur in the same opera, and in situations where the ludicrous is wildly mixed with horror. In the scene with the statue in the churchyard, every inflexion of *Leporello's* voice is full of grotesque terror; and this is the case,

also, when he bursts into his master's room, exclaiming that the "man of stone" is on the stairs, and imitating the heavy tread of the unearthly visitant. But the ludicrous often mingles with the horrible in the most gloomy imagination. In the *Così fan tutte*, which is a piece of pure *badinage* from beginning to end, and in which there is not more seriousness than in Lord Byron's *Beppo*, Mozart has thrown into the music a tone of feeling and passion which is constantly at variance with the levity of the characters and the farcical nature of the incidents.

This deficiency of *vis comica* in these comic operas might have been a serious objection to them, were it not for their innumerable beauties, among which it is diminished to a speck. In order to be faultless as works of art, they ought certainly to have combined the vivacity and humour of Rossini with Mozart's own tenderness, melancholy, and passion. But the same work cannot exhibit the results of different and probably incompatible mental temperaments; and it would be as unreasonable to expect from Mozart the sparkling gaiety of Rossini, as to expect from Rossini the profound feeling of Mozart. That the qualities of Mozart are immeasurably higher than those of Rossini is disputed by none; but the best comic pieces of the Italian composer are so full of amusement, and so calculated to please the popular ear, that their liveliness and brilliancy, aided by the love of novelty, have, for the time, thrown into the shade the far less perishable beauties of his illustrious predecessor.

The two operas, *Idomeneo* and *La Clemenza di Tito*, are perfect specimens of the serious musical drama, un-

rivalled by any works of this lofty class which have either preceded or followed them. In the *Zauberflöte*, the genius of Mozart has luxuriated in the romantic wildness of the subject, and produced creations of enchanting beauty, like those of Shakspeare in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. But it is in the impassioned scenes and unearthly horrors of *Don Giovanni* that he has displayed his highest powers; and this astonishing production is the greatest triumph that has yet been achieved in dramatic music.

In sacred music, Mozart, like every other composer, must yield to Handel; but the *Requiem* is the most solemn, expressive, and deeply affecting religious composition that has appeared since the days of that mighty master. In his masses, written for the ordinary service of the church, he has conformed to the prevailing taste of the time, and mingled strains full of sublimity and devotional feeling with light and airy passages, at variance alike with the style of ecclesiastical music and with the sentiments which it ought to inspire. His sacred musical drama, *Davide Penitente*, has never been performed in England, though one or two of the airs have been sung at our festivals. The effect of the work, when given entire, is described by those who have heard it as being very great; the concluding fugue, in particular, and double chorus with which it terminates, being of surpassing grandeur.

In instrumental music he has never yet been excelled. His magnificent symphonies are the delight of every audience; and every amateur, worthy of the title, knows well his exquisite quartets and quintets. His concertos and sonatas for the piano-forte have been, in a con-

siderable measure, laid aside to make way for more modern compositions ; some of which, being written by truly great masters for an instrument, the powers of which have been greatly enlarged, are really more striking and effective ; while others are popular merely because they afford room for a display of showy execution. But, from pieces of the former as well as the latter kind, we turn with pleasure to the pure, delicate, and graceful music of Mozart, when performed by an artist of a spirit congenial to his own,—an artist such as JOHN CRAMER, whose recent retirement from his profession is a loss which the musical world will long have reason to deplore.

Among the German composers who flourished in the latter part of the last century, none, for a time, enjoyed greater popularity than PLEYEL. He was born in Austria, in 1757, and studied under Haydn. He was for a considerable time chapel-master at Strasburg, but spent the latter part of his life in Paris, where he was an extensive publisher of music. Pleyel's compositions are very numerous, and almost entirely instrumental, consisting of orchestral symphonies, quartets, trios, duets, concertos, sonatas, &c., for various instruments. Dr. Burney, speaking of Pleyel in 1789, says, "There has lately been a rage for the music of Pleyel, which has diminished the attention of amateurs and the public to all other violin music. But whether this ingenious and engaging composer does not draw faster from the fountain of his invention than it will long bear, and whether his imitations of Haydn, and too constant use of semitones, and coquetry in *rallentandos* and pauses, will not be soon construed into affectation, I know not ;

but it has already been remarked by critical observers, that his fancy, though at first so fertile, is not so inexhaustible but that he frequently repeats himself, and does not sufficiently disdain the mixture of common passages with his own elegant ideas." Though the true character of Pleyel's music was thus early appreciated by judicious critics, yet the rage for it went on increasing; and, for many years after Burney wrote, and long after the music of Haydn and Mozart had been introduced into England, the quartets, sonatas for the piano-forte, and other instrumental compositions of Pleyel, were in general use, to the exclusion of the far superior works of those masters. Perhaps our amateurs have now erred in going to the opposite extreme; for, though Pleyel's music possesses neither depth of harmony, greatness of conception, nor strength of feeling, yet it is often exceedingly melodious, elegant, and graceful; and some of his quartets ought still to be among the stock pieces of every society of amateurs.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MUSIC OF THE REFORMED CHURCH.—METRICAL
PSALMODY.

THE music, which, at the time of the Reformation, was adopted in the Liturgy of the Church of England, did not differ much from that which had been employed in the corresponding parts of the Romish ritual. The English Liturgy, or Book of Common Prayer, was published, and ordered to be generally used, in 1548; and, in 1550, the whole cathedral service was set to musical notes, and published by John Marbeck, organist of Windsor*. The chants of the principal hymns, such as the *Te Deum Laudamus*, and responses

* The history of this man is remarkable. He was favourable to the Reformation, and formed a society with several persons of similar principles. Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, having received intimation that Marbeck and his friends held frequent meetings, obtained a commission to search for heretical books. Marbeck was apprehended, along with Anthony Person, a priest, Robert Testwood, a chorister, and Henry Filmer, a tradesman of Windsor. Among Marbeck's papers were found, in his own hand-writing, some notes on the Bible, and a Concordance. He was tried for heresy, with his three friends, and they were all condemned. The others were immediately brought to the stake, but Marbeck appears to have been saved in consequence of Gardiner's personal regard for him. After this escape he applied industriously to his professional pursuits; and, on the death of Henry VIII., made a public profession of the Protestant faith, and completed and published his Concordance.

contained in Marbeck's book, were nearly the same with the missals, graduals, and antiphonaries formerly used. The anthems, too, originally composed for the reformed church, appear to have been similar to those previously used, except that their words were English instead of Latin; and the great ecclesiastical composers of the time of Edward the Sixth, of whom some account has already been given, have also left specimens of their previous compositions of a similar kind, adapted to the Latin words of the Romish ritual. When Queen Mary abrogated all the laws of her predecessor concerning religion, and restored the Romish service, it appears that the compositions of the same masters, Tye, Tallis, Bird, &c., with Latin words, were again performed in the churches; for the list of the establishment of the queen's chapel contained nearly the same names with that of Edward the Sixth. And it is not a little remarkable that, after the accession of Elizabeth, the establishment of the royal chapel remained almost the same as in the two preceding reigns. These great harmonists seem to have been little troubled with religious scruples.

Elizabeth succeeded to the crown in November, 1558, and, in April following, gave the royal assent to the Bill for the uniformity of Common Prayer; and the Book of Common Prayer, thus established by law, was published immediately afterwards. At this time religious dissensions ran very high; and, in respect to church music, in particular, the Puritans had begun to raise that clamour against "playing upon organs," "curious singing," and "tossing about the psalms from side to side"—meaning responsive or alternate

singing,—which, at a subsequent period, banished, for a time, choral music from our churches. Elizabeth, in these circumstances, conducted herself with the wisdom which belonged to her character; avoiding, on the one hand, the bigotry and superstition of the Romish Church, and, on the other, the fanaticism of the violent reformers. “In 1560,” says Heylin, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, “the Church of England, as it was first settled and established under Queen Elizabeth, may be regarded as brought to perfection. The government of the church by archbishops and bishops; its doctrines reduced to their ancient purity, according to the articles agreed on in Convocation, 1552; the liturgy, conformable to the primitive patterns, and all the rites and ceremonies therein prescribed, accommodated to the honour of God and increase of piety. The festivals preserved in their former dignity; the sacrament celebrated in the most reverend manner; music retained in all such churches in which provision had been made for the maintenance of it, or where the people could be trained up, at least, to *plain song*. All which particulars were either established by the laws, commanded by the queen’s injunctions, or otherwise retained by virtue of some ancient usages not by law prohibited. Nor is it much to be admired [wondered at], that such a general conformity to those ancient usages was constantly observed in all cathedrals, and the most part of the parish churches, considering how well they were preceded by the court itself; in which the liturgy was officiated every day, both morning and evening, not only in the public chapel, but the private closet;—celebrated in the chapel with organs and other musical

instruments, and the most excellent voices, both of men and children, that could be procured in all the kingdom."

During Queen Elizabeth's reign the Puritans made frequent demonstrations of their hostility to the service of the Established Church. In 1571, they published a Declaration, or *Confession*, in which they say, "Concerning singing of psalms, we allow of the people's joining with one voice in a plain tune, but not of tossing the psalms from one side to the other, with intermingling of organs." In 1586 a pamphlet was extensively circulated, entitled *A Request of all true Christians to the House of Parliament*, which, among other changes, prays "that all cathedral churches may be put down, where the service of God is generally abused by piping with organs, singing, ringing, and trowling of psalms from one side of the choir to the other, with the squeaking of chanting choristers, disguised (as are all the rest) in white surplices; some in corner caps and silly copes, imitating the fashion and manner of Antichrist, the Pope, that man of sin and child of perdition, with his other rabble of miscreants and shavelings." These are specimens of the spirit in which this hostility was carried on in England, with increasing violence, till it at length accomplished its object.

But the proceedings of the English Puritans were moderate, when compared with the conduct of similar sects in France and the Low Countries. The histories of that period contain many accounts of their outrages, of which the following, related by Strada (*De Bello Belgico*) may be taken as an instance.

"On the 21st of August, 1566, these gentry came

into the great church of Antwerp with weapons hidden under their clothes; and, waiting till vespers were over, they shouted with a hideous cry of "Long live the *Gheuses*," a name which they had taken at a drinking-bout by way of distinguishing their faction. Nay, they commanded the image of the Blessed Virgin to repeat their acclamations, and madly swore they would beat and kill her if she refused to comply. And though Joannes Immerselius, the governor of the town, with some apparitors, ordered them to keep the peace, they would not listen to them: and, well-meaning people having fled, to get out of the tumult, the Gheuses shut the door after them, and, like conquerors, possessed themselves of the church; where, finding no resistance, when the clock struck the last hour of the day, and darkness increased their confidence, one of them, in order to give formality to their wickedness, began to sing a Geneva psalm. Then, as if a trumpet had sounded a charge, being all moved by the same spirit, they fell upon the images of the mother of our Saviour, of Christ himself, and his Apostles. Some threw them down and trampled upon them; and others thrust swords into their sides and hacked off their heads with axes. They broke the picture-frames, defaced the buildings on the walls, demolished the organs, threw down the statues from their niches and pedestals, and committed every possible violence and impiety, even to the greasing of their shoes with the holy oil, and getting drunk with the wine which they found in the vestry prepared for the altar."

When Queen Elizabeth established the Liturgy in

the manner already mentioned, she published injunctions to the clergy, in one of which, on the subject of church music, it is said,—“The queen’s majesty neither meaning in anywise the decay of anything that might conveniently tend to the use and continuance of music, neither to have the same so abused in any part of the church, that thereby the common prayer should be worse understood by the hearers, willeth and commandeth that there be a modest and distinct song, so used in all parts of the common prayers of the church, that the same may be as plainly understood as if it were without singers.” This injunction has been generally obeyed, and it has contributed to the unrivalled excellence of the choral music of the church of England, which, while it possesses all the grandeur which the power of harmony can bestow, is grave, solemn, and devout, and free from that mixture of intricate counterpoint with light and florid airs, which gives such a motley and incongruous character to the music of the Romish Church. But the Puritans of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries attacked without discrimination everything, whether good or bad, that was derived from the ancient service of the church; and therefore, not content with the reform which had been effected in choral music, they still insisted on its total abolition.

Besides the music properly belonging to the Liturgy of the Church of England, the character and form of which was thus settled by law, there is another important branch of church music, common to all Protestant places of worship. This is METRICAL PSALMODY,

to the origin of which we have already had occasion to advert; but it is necessary now to trace somewhat more particularly its introduction into Great Britain.

Metrical Psalmody appears to have been used so early as the twelfth or thirteenth century, by the celebrated sect of the Albigenses, who anticipated, in some measure, the reformers of later times, and were cruelly extirpated as heretics. It is recorded by ecclesiastical writers, that when their great persecutor, Simon de Montfort, in 1210, had lighted a pile for the destruction of a body of them, they threw themselves into the flames, to the number of a hundred and forty, singing psalms. Psalms were sung in England by the disciples of Wickliffe in the fourteenth century, and by those of John Huss and Jerome of Prague in the fifteenth; and it appears from a hymn-book of the Bohemian brethren, printed in 1538, (of which an account is given by Burney,) that the tunes used by them were taken from the chants to which the Latin hymns of the Romish church were sung. This, doubtless, was the case with the psalms of the other sects that have been mentioned.

Some of the oldest of the psalm tunes still extant are said to have been composed by LUTHER. This great reformer was not only a lover of music, but conversant with the art. In one of his epistles, he places music above all arts and sciences, except theology, because religion and music are alone able to soothe and compose the mind. In the same epistle he says, "We know that music is hateful and intolerable to demons;" and thus he concludes, "I verily think, and am not ashamed to say, that, except theology, no art

is comparable to music." Luther is supposed to be the author of the melody to which we sing the hundredth psalm, and of the hymn on the Last Judgment; but this belief is not supported by any positive evidence. Tradition gives to him several fine melodies, which are preserved in the German psalm-books, and still sung in all the Lutheran churches*. But, though he may or may not have composed any of those tunes, it is certain that he himself published a collection of psalms in the German language, for the use of the reformed church; declaring, in one of his epistles, that he intended, according to the example of the ancient fathers of the church, to make psalms or spiritual songs for the common people, that the Word of God might continue among them in psalms, if not otherwise.

This example of publishing metrical versions of the psalms in the vernacular tongue, was soon followed in other countries. In France, the celebrated poet, Marot, about the year 1540, versified thirty of the psalms; and they acquired such favour, that, in spite of the censures of the Sorbonne, they were sung by the king, queen, and chief personages of the court, to the tunes of the most favourite songs of the time. Marot, afraid of persecution for heresy, fled to Geneva, where he versified twenty more of the psalms; and these, with the thirty which had been published at Paris, were printed at Geneva in 1543, with a preface by Calvin himself. The remainder of the psalms were afterwards turned into French verse by Theodore Beza; and the whole were published at Strasburg in 1545.

* Some of these may be found in the third volume of *Burney's History*.

None of these publications contained music,—the psalms, being at first sung to such secular tunes as were conceived to be most suitable to them. But, soon afterwards, different persons composed tunes expressly adapted to the metrical versions. The first of these seems to have been GUILLEAUME FRANC, who composed a set of tunes published at Geneva, but without harmony, as singing in parts was not permitted by Calvin. The other composers of these tunes were LOUIS BOURGEOIS, CLAUDE GOUDIMEL, and CLAUDE LE JEUNE, whose different collections, published in the latter part of the sixteenth century, are still extant. Of these composers (except Le Jeune, who was distinguished in other branches of the art), very little is known. Goudimel, in consequence of his having set to music Marot's psalms, was one of the victims in the massacre of St. Bartholomew. His work, which was first printed at Paris, was afterwards reprinted in Holland, in 1607, for the use of the Calvinists, but it seems not to have been well adapted for congregational singing; for, in an edition of the psalms of Le Jeune, printed at Leyden, in 1633, the editor says that, "In publishing the psalms in parts, he had preferred the music of Claude Le Jeune to that of Goudimel; for, as the counterpoint was simply note for note, the most ignorant of music, if possessed of a voice, and acquainted with the psalm-tune, might join in the performance of any one of them; which is impracticable in the compositions of Goudimel, many of whose psalms, being composed in fugue, can be performed only by persons well skilled in music."

The first authority for the use of psalmody in Eng-

land appears to have been the Act of Uniformity for the use of common prayer in English, in 1548, which contained a proviso, that "it shall be lawful for all men, as well in churches, chapels, oratories, and other places, to use openly any psalm or prayer taken out of the Bible, at any due time; not letting or omitting thereby the service or any part thereof mentioned in the said book;" that is, the Book of Common Prayer. In the following year, 1549, a metrical version of fifty-one of the psalms was published by Thomas Sternhold. It was reprinted in 1552; but neither edition contained musical notes. The entire version of the psalms was not published till 1562, when it was subjoined, for the first time, to the Book of Common Prayer, under this title,—*"The Whole Booke of Psalmes, collected into English Metre, by T. Sternhold, J. Hopkins, and others, conferred with the Ebrue, with apt notes to sing them withal."* These notes consist of the mere tunes, without bass or any other part. The tunes are chiefly German, and the same which are still used in the Continental Lutheran and Calvinist churches. From this it may be inferred that the same tunes had been previously known in England, and made use of from the time that metrical psalmody was allowed in our churches; and many of these venerable old melodies are retained in our worship to this day.

The first collection of these psalm-tunes, set in parts, was published in 1579, by William Damon, under the following title:—"The Psalms of David in English Meter, with notes of four parts set unto them by *GUILIELMO DAMON*, to the use of the godly Christians, for recreating themselves, instede of fonde and un-

seemely ballades." An excellent edition of the psalms, containing a separate tune for every psalm, was published by T. Este in 1594. Several eminent musicians, among whom were Dowland and Farnaby, were contributors to this work. The principal melody is given to the *tenor*, and the other parts are *cantus*, (treble) *altus*, (counter-tenor) and *bassus*. The counterpoint is simple, or note against note; and the harmony excellent. A still more valuable collection is that of RAVENS-CROFT, first published in 1621, which contains a different melody for every psalm. Many of them are by the editor himself, and others are taken from the German, French, and Flemish collections. The harmony, in four parts, was composed by twenty-one English musicians, among whom we find the distinguished names of Tallis, Dowland, Morley, Bennet, Farnaby, and John Milton, the father of the poet. In this publication Ravenscroft has put the name of Dowland to the hundredth psalm; from which circumstance, the Rev. W. Lisle Bowles* has inferred that Luther could not have been its author,—strengthening this conclusion by showing that the air is so well adapted, not merely to the metre, but to the accent, of the first verse of the English psalm, that it must have been composed expressly for those words. But this is by no means conclusive; for, in the first place, all that is indicated by Ravenscroft is, that the *parts* were added by Dowland, the melody itself being placed by him, in the index, among the French tunes; and, in the second place, no argument deduced from any supposed atten-

* *Parochial History of Bremhill.*

tion, on the part of the composers of those days, to the accent or prosody of language, is entitled to much weight. Dowland's secular compositions show that he was wholly inattentive to such considerations. Mr. Bowles, therefore, has left the question as to Luther's authorship of the music of this psalm just where he found it. There is no difficulty in supposing that a simple tune may suit the accents of four lines of verse, though not composed for them; and Luther may have not only composed, but harmonized this tune, though other harmony may have been afterwards put to it by Dowland.

To those collections we must add that of JOHN PLAYFORD, published some time after that of Ravenscroft, and entitled, "The whole Book of Psalms, with the usual Hymns and Spiritual Songs, composed in three parts." This collection was long in general use throughout the kingdom, and greatly contributed to the diffusion of psalmody.

In Scotland, as in England, metrical psalmody was introduced at the time of the Reformation; and the psalm-tunes, sung by the congregation, without the accompaniment of an organ or any other instrument, form the only music admitted either into the service of the established church of that country, or into the places of worship of the dissenters who have seceded from it. The psalms are generally sung in unison, or, to speak more accurately, in unisons and octaves; but in congregations among whom there is some musical knowledge, an imperfect harmony is produced by the bass and other parts being sung by such individuals as are capable of doing so. In Edinburgh and the other

principal towns, the clergymen pay considerable attention to the improvement of psalmody, by forming little choirs of trained singers to lead the congregation, and by promoting among their parishioners the cultivation of singing in parts.

Since the old collections already mentioned, many books of psalmody have been, and still continue to be published. They are, indeed, by far too numerous; and a great portion of them, being produced by very incompetent persons, are filled with mean and vulgar tunes, and crude and incorrect harmonies. The circulation of so many books of this description has tended very much to injure parochial singing; though the evil could easily be remedied by the clergymen and other persons in authority taking care that no books of psalmody were used in places of worship but such as are of known and established character.

Dr. Burney entertained very erroneous opinions as to metrical psalmody, and almost everything he says regarding it is tinged with prejudice. The following remarkable passage may be cited as containing a summary of his sentiments on the subject:—"The Puritans, who, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, had devoted our cathedral service to destruction, and who seemed to wish not only to hear the psalms, but the whole Scriptures, syllabically sung in metre, assigned, as a reason for such an *abuse of words**, as well as annihilation of poetry and music, the absolute necessity of such a simple kind of music as would suit the *whole congregation*. But why is the *whole* congregation to *sing*, any

* The *Italics* in this passage are Dr. Burney's own.

more than preach or read prayers? Indeed, it seems to have been the wish of illiterate and furious reformers, that all religious offices should be performed by *field-preachers* and *street-singers*; but it is well known by all who read the Scriptures, or hear them read, that both *singing-men* and *singing-women* were appointed to perform distinct parts of religious rites among the ancient Hebrews, as well as Christians; and it does not appear by any passages in the Bible, by anything which the most ancient and learned commentators have urged concerning the performance of the psalms, or by Rabbinical traditions, that they were all originally intended to be sung by the multitude, or whole congregation, indiscriminately. *Singing* implies not only a tunable *voice*, but skill in *music*; for music either is or is not an *art*, or something which nature and instinct do not supply; if it be allowed that title, then study, practice, and experience may, at least, be as necessary to its attainment as to that of a mechanical trade or calling. *Every* member of a conventicle, however it may abound with cordwainers and tailors, would not pretend to make a shoe or a suit of clothes; and yet in our churches, *all* are to sing. Such singing as is customary in our parochial service gives neither ornament nor dignity to the psalms, or portions of Scripture, that are drawled out and bawled with that unmusical and unmeaning vehemence which the satirist has described:—

. . . . So swells each windpipe—
Such as from lab'ring lungs enthusiastic flows,—
High sound, attemper'd to the vocal nose.

Dunciad.

It cannot be for the sake of the sentiments or instruc-

tions which those words contain; these are better understood when read by the clergyman and clerk; and why, after being read, they should be sung, unless music is supposed to add to their energy or embellishment, it is not easy to discover."

This passage sets out with an insinuation that the introduction of metrical psalmody into the English churches was the work of the Puritans—the same parties "who, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, had devoted our cathedral service to destruction." But it has been already seen that psalmody was admitted into our Church by the Act of Uniformity for the use of common prayer, in the reign of Edward the Sixth, when the ritual was established in conformity with the doctrines of the reformed religion, and there was no indication of any attempt to destroy the essentials of our cathedral service. Psalmody, of course, was put a stop to by Queen Mary, when the Romish ritual was restored; but when Elizabeth re-established the service of the Protestant Church, the use of psalmody was restored, and immediately became general all over England. For this fact we have Burney's own authority, though he states it in the tone which pervades all that he says on this subject. "In the reign of Queen Mary, all the Protestants, except those who courted martyrdom, sang these psalms *sotto voce*; but after the accession of Queen Elizabeth, like orgies, they were roared aloud in almost every street, as well as church, throughout the kingdom." Psalmody, therefore, first introduced in the reign of Edward the Sixth, was restored on the accession of Elizabeth; and this "wise princess," as Burney justly calls her, is warmly praised by him, for having "steered, according

to the true spirit of the Church of England, between the two extremes of superstitious bigotry and irreverent fanaticism." How then can he ascribe the introduction of psalmody to the influence of an irreverent fanaticism, to which Queen Elizabeth *refused* to yield? Sternhold and Hopkins's metrical version of the psalms was subjoined to the book of common prayer, because this wise Queen and her counsellors believed that it could be used with advantage to religion, *along with* the ritual contained in that book, and not, certainly, from any compliance with the wishes of those who desired its destruction.

Dr. Burney then asks, "Why is the *whole* congregation to *sing*, any more than to preach or read prayers?" The idea of the whole congregation preaching, involves an utter absurdity, which the idea of the whole congregation singing does not; but the congregation *does* actually join in reading the prayers; and why may it not also join in singing the psalms, which are prayers? If the congregation does the one, it is proper and consistent that it should do the other.

It is asserted by Dr. Burney, that "both *singing-men* and *singing-women* were appointed to perform distinct parts of religious rites among the ancient Hebrews *as well as Christians*;" and he adds, that "it does not appear by any passages in the Bible, by anything which the most ancient and learned commentators have urged concerning the performance of the psalms, or by Rabbinical traditions, that they were all originally intended to be sung by the multitude, or whole congregation, indiscriminately." We may leave out of view the question as to the practice of the ancient Hebrews, for the

Jewish ritual was entirely abolished by the introduction of Christianity ; but the assertion, in so far as it relates to the primitive Christians, is entirely incorrect. When the Divine Founder of our religion himself instituted the sacrament of the supper, and gave to his disciples the example of the manner in which it has ever since been observed in all Christian churches, the solemnity was concluded by their singing a hymn or psalm. When Paul and Silas were in prison, “at midnight they prayed and sang praises unto God.” St. Paul enjoins to the church of the Colossians the use of “psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” A similar injunction is given by him to the Ephesians: and James says, “Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.” That the primitive Christians must necessarily have followed both the precepts and the example of Christ himself, and of his apostles, cannot be doubted; and accordingly we have the evidence of profane writers to this effect. Pliny accused the Christians, not only of neglecting the sacrifices, but of holding meetings before day-break, to sing in honour of Christ as a God; and Lucian notices the rage for psalm-singing among the Christians. In those times, when Christianity was not established, or even tolerated, and when the converts to this religion had no churches or regular places of worship, it is absurd to suppose that their psalms and hymns were sung by organized bands of *singing-men* and *singing-women*, apart from the congregation; and Burney, in another part of his work,* makes admissions utterly inconsistent with

* Vol. ii., p. 5-6.

such a supposition. He says that "It is in vain to seek for any regular ritual before this period," that is, the time of Constantine, the first Christian emperor; and that he "cannot find better authority for the establishment of music in the church, during the reign of Constantine, than that of Eusebius, who was his contemporary, and a principal agent in the ecclesiastical transactions of the times." And he adds, "It was in the year 312 from the coming of our Saviour, that Christianity, after the defeat of Maxentius, became the established religion of the Roman empire. The primitive Christians previous to this important era, being subject to persecution, proscription, and martyrdom, must frequently have been reduced to silent prayer in dens and caves." Previous to this era, however, and even down from the time of our Saviour himself and his apostles, the first Christians are proved to have sung psalms and hymns in their exercises of devotion; but, without churches, without a ritual, subject to persecution, proscription and martyrdom, meeting in secrecy and apprehension of discovery, are we to imagine that they sat and listened to disciplined choirs of singing-men and singing-women?

The argument that, because music is an art, and requires study, practice, and experience, as well as a mechanical trade or calling, *every* member of a congregation ought no more to pretend to sing than to make a pair of shoes, is a very shallow fallacy. Music is an art, undoubtedly; but its different branches require very different degrees of study, practice, and experience. A shepherd tending his flock, and a village maiden at her

rural labour, will sing “the old and antique songs” of their native valley, in a manner that will charm the most cultivated taste, and even move the feelings,

More than light airs, and recollected terms
Of these most brisk and giddy-paced times ;—

such songs as that which is described by the enamoured Duke *Orsino* ;—

Mark it, Cesario ; it is old and plain :
The spinsters and the knitters in the sun,
And the free maids that weave their thread with bones,
Do use to chant it.

But if it requires little art and study to sing these ancient and simple airs, to sing the melodies of the psalms requires still less. In those parts of the country where attention is paid to parochial psalmody, especially in Scotland, the psalm tunes are familiar to every one ; and when devoutly sung by the whole body of a congregation, nothing can be more fallacious than the ludicrous light in which Dr. Burney has attempted to place them. They are, on the contrary, solemn, impressive, and, in a large congregation, frequently sublime. When Haydn heard a psalm sung in unison by four thousand children, in St. Paul’s Cathedral, he was moved to tears, and declared that that simple and natural air had given him the greatest pleasure he had ever received from music. In every large congregation there must be many coarse and untunable voices ; but the greatest part of the assembly will be qualified, in voice and ear, to sing such plain and simple music with propriety ; and in the present state of musical knowledge, there are few congregations without many persons who can

sing at least a correct bass to the melody, especially if the harmony is simply and steadily played upon an organ, and sung by a small choir; or (as in Scotland,) sung by a small choir without an organ.

Dr. Burney's arguments against the use of psalmody are derived entirely from the abuses of it; and, whatever may have been the case in his time, his description of these abuses is much exaggerated as applicable to the psalmody of the present day. Still it may, and ought to be, much improved. The parochial clergy ought everywhere to pay great attention to its cultivation. It ought to form a regular branch of tuition in schools, by which not only an end would be put to the "drawling and bawling," (for Burney's complaint of which there is still *some* foundation,) but the people would be enabled to sing the different parts of the harmony. Care ought to be taken to introduce into every congregation some collection of the psalms of established character, in order that the harmony may not only be good but *uniform*; for a bass taken from one collection, a tenor from another, and a counter-tenor from a third, though good in themselves, may produce nothing but discord, when joined together. Strict attention ought also to be paid to the *time* of these tunes. They are too often sung as if they consisted entirely of equal notes, which are drawn out to an immoderate length. But they have long and short notes, accent, and rhythmical movement; a disregard to which affords the chief ground for Dr. Burney's charge against them.

The importance of a part of our musical service, in which the whole congregation have it in their power to raise their voices in songs of prayer and praise, is more

and more acknowledged. And the prevailing impression on this subject will naturally be followed by the adoption of the means necessary to invest this portion of our public worship with all the dignity and solemnity of which it is capable.

CHAPTER XV.

COMPOSERS OF ENGLISH SACRED MUSIC SINCE THE TIME OF PURCELL.

—CLARKE.—ALDRICH.—CROFT. — WELDON. — GREENE. — TRAVERS. — BOYCE. — NARES. — KENT. — BATTISHILL.—ARNOLD.—WESLEY.—CROTCH.—ATTWOOD.—HORSLEY.—ADAMS.—ENGLISH CATHEDRAL MUSIC.

THE choral music appropriated to the service of our cathedrals is peculiarly English, and differs essentially from the sacred music of every other country. It belongs to the school of composition founded by the great harmonists of the sixteenth century; and the grave and religious character impressed upon it by Gibbons, Tallis, and Bird, has been preserved by the unbroken series of distinguished musicians, who, down to our own time, have devoted their talents to the service of the church. Our music consecrated to religion retains the grand and solemn harmony of the old masters; and, if its melodies have, in the progress of time, acquired additional grace and smoothness, they have not lost the serious and chastened expression which befits the language of devotion. It admits none of those light and tripping measures, which in the words of Pope,

Make the soul dance upon a jig to Heaven,

or rather, draw it down from those heavenly contemplations which religious music ought to inspire, and fill it with the thoughts of worldly pursuits and trifling amusements.

Some account has already been given of the most distinguished composers for the English Church, down to the latter part of the seventeenth century, including the illustrious Purcell. It remains to notice the most eminent of their successors.

DR. JEREMIAH CLARKE was educated in the Chapel Royal, under Dr. Blow; and was afterwards, along with him, joint organist of the Chapel Royal. A hopeless passion for a lady of rank much superior to his own, threw him into a state of melancholy, which terminated in suicide, in the year 1707*. Being thus

* The death of this "pathetic composer," as Burney calls him, was attended by some singular and melancholy circumstances, which are thus related by that historian:—

"Early in life he was so unfortunate as to conceive a violent and hopeless passion for a very beautiful lady, of a rank far superior to his own; and his sufferings, under these circumstances, became at length so intolerable, that he resolved to terminate them by suicide. The late Mr. Samuel Wiely, one of the lay-vicars of St. Paul's, who was very intimate with him, related the following extraordinary story, which he had from his unfortunate friend himself:—'Being at the house of a friend in the country, he found himself so miserable, that he suddenly determined to return to London; his friend, observing in his behaviour great marks of dejection, furnished him with a horse and a servant to attend him. In his way to town, a fit of melancholy and despair having seized him, he alighted, and giving the horse to the servant, went into a field, in the corner of which there was a pond surrounded with trees, which pointed out to his choice two ways of getting rid of life; but not being inclined to the one more than the other, he left it to the determination of chance; and taking a piece of money out of his pocket, and tossing it in the air, determined to abide by its decision. But the money falling on its edge in the clay, seemed to prohibit both these means of destruction. His mind was too much disordered to

cut off at an early period of life, his works were few ; but his anthems, which are printed in Boyce's collection, are remarkable for their tender and pathetic expression. His full anthem, "Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem," is considered the best of his compositions.

The Rev. Dr. HENRY ALDRICH, though not a professional musician, was profoundly skilled in the art, and his compositions for the church, which are numerous, are not inferior to those of the best masters of his time. He was appointed Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, in 1689, and died in 1710. He was a man of great and varied attainments ; being not only an excellent musician, but a learned divine, and an accomplished scholar and critic. He devoted himself to the improvement and cultivation of music in the university to which he belonged ; "and," says Burney, "music perhaps never flourished so much at Oxford, as under his example, guidance, and patronage."

Dr. Aldrich composed nearly forty services and anthems, which are preserved in the third volume of Dr. Tudway's collection. Besides these, he added to our stock of cathedral music many admirable compositions, by adapting English words from the Psalms and Liturgy

receive comfort or take advantage of this delay ; he therefore mounted his horse and rode to London, determined to find some other means of getting rid of life. And, in July, 1707, not many weeks after his return, he shot himself in his own house in St. Paul's Church-yard ; the late Mr. John Reading, organist of St. Dunstan's church, a scholar of Dr. Blow and master of Mr. Stanley, intimately acquainted with Clarke, happening to go by the door at the instant the pistol went off, upon entering the house, found his friend and fellow-student in the agonies of death."

to motets of Tallis, Bird, Palestrina, Carissimi, and other composers, which were originally set to Latin words for the Romish service. He was much beloved for his benevolent character, and cheerful and social temper; and produced, for the amusement of his friends, some lively rounds and catches, which are still preserved. His round, "Hark, the bonny Christ-church bells," is familiar to every body. He bequeathed to his college his large collection of music, of which Dr. Burney says, "Having, in 1778 and 1779, made a catalogue of these musical works, I can venture to say, that for masses, motets, madrigals, and anthems of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the collection is the most complete of any that I have had an opportunity of consulting." It is much to be regretted that nothing has been done to give the public the benefit of these musical treasures.

DR. WILLIAM CROFT was born in 1677, and educated in the Chapel Royal, under Dr. Blow. In 1707, on the death of Jeremiah Clarke, he was appointed joint-organist with Blow, on whose death, in 1708, he became sole organist, and master of the children of the Chapel Royal, and also organist of Westminster Abbey. In 1715, he was created doctor of music in the university of Oxford. In 1724, he published, by subscription, a splendid edition of his choral music, in two volumes folio, under the title of *Musica Sacra, or Select Anthems, in score*. The author says, in his preface, that this work is the first specimen of music in score, engraved on plates; choral compositions having been previously printed with types, in single parts, and full of errors. He died in 1727, in the fiftieth year of his

age, of a disease caused by his attendance at the coronation of George the Second.

Dr. Croft's anthems are very grand and solemn; their harmony is pure, and their melody elegant and expressive. These qualities are peculiarly remarkable in his three-part anthem, "O Lord, thou hast searched me out," which, from its length, is divided into two parts. Every movement of this anthem is excellent; and such is its apparent simplicity, that the great skill of its construction is not at first perceived. The opening movement, for three voices, is graceful and flowing, but without the slightest departure from the severity of the church style; and the solo which follows, in its breadth, expression, and freedom from the stiff divisions which too often encumber the best music of the period, is a model of composition for a bass voice. Dr. Croft, indeed, is himself by no means free from this fault; and, even in this anthem, the tenor solo, which opens the second part, and the verse for three voices, which follows, are deformed by such passages. The concluding chorus, a fugue on two subjects, is as clear in effect as masterly in contrivance. The full anthem, "O Lord, rebuke me not," contains a fugue in six parts, and on two subjects, which is in the true ecclesiastical style of the old masters, and one of the noblest compositions of which our church can boast. Dr. Croft completed the burial service, of which Purcell composed only one movement, "Thou knowest the secrets of our hearts," which was performed at the funeral of Queen Mary, and at his own. Croft followed the design of Purcell, in writing it throughout in simple counterpoint of note against note, so that every syllable is uttered simulta-

neously by all the voices ; and the solemn simplicity of this harmony is deeply impressive. The anthems, " God is gone up," and " Put me not to rebuke," both of which are in Boyce's collection, are among the best of Croft's compositions.

JOHN WELDON was a native of Chichester. In 1708 he succeeded Dr. Blow as one of his majesty's organists ; and he likewise became organist of St. Bride's, and of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields. He died in 1736. Weldon composed many anthems, of which two specimens (the best, it may be presumed,) are contained in Dr. Boyce's collection. One of these, a full anthem in six parts, " Hear my crying, O God," is excellent ; but it has been remarked that his church music in general, though pleasing and melodious, is deficient in invention and depth of harmonical combination. Weldon composed some beautiful songs which are still popular ; among them is the air, " Let ambition fire thy mind," which has been converted into " Hope, thou nurse of young desire," the elegant duet in the opera of *Love in a Village*.

Dr. MAURICE GREENE was educated in the choir of St. Paul's, and early noticed as a good organist and composer for the church. Before he was twenty years of age, he obtained the place of organist of St. Dunstan's-in-the-West ; and he afterwards obtained, in succession, the situations of organist of St. Paul's, organist and composer to the Chapel Royal, and master of his majesty's band. In 1730, he obtained the degree of doctor of music at Cambridge, and was appointed professor of music in that university. In 1750, he succeeded, through the death of a relation, to a large property ; and, being

now in a state of ease and affluence, formed the plan of making a great collection of English cathedral music, in order to prevent it from being lost or corrupted. He accordingly collected a great number of manuscript anthems and services, and had made considerable progress in preparing them for publication, when he was prevented, by the failure of his health, from prosecuting his design. He transferred it, therefore, to Dr. Boyce, his friend and pupil, whose magnificent publication is a completion of the design of Dr. Greene. He died in the year 1755.

When Handel arrived in England, Greene courted his society with great assiduity ; but a violent animosity afterwards took place between them, which lasted during Greene's life. In consequence of this, Greene took every opportunity of decrying the works of Handel, and extolling those of his rivals, while Handel always expressed aversion and contempt for Greene. "Handel," says Burney, "was but too prone to treat inferior artists with contempt. What provocation he had received from Greene, after their first acquaintance, I know not ; but for many years of his life, he never spoke of him without some injurious epithet." "Greene's figure," he adds, "was below the common size, and he had the misfortune to be very much deformed ; yet his address and exterior manners were those of a man of the world, mild, attentive, and well-bred."

Greene deserves to be placed in the highest rank of our musical writers for the church, notwithstanding the disparaging terms in which Dr. Burney and other critics, have spoken of his compositions. Burney's praise is faint, while he dwells upon the faults of

Greene's style—his divisions, repetitions of the same passage, a note higher or a note lower, and shakes. And Mr. Mason, in his *Essay on Church Music*, says that Dr. Croft "was the first composer who gave into the defect of long and intricate divisions, and unnecessary, if not improper, repetitions of parts of the melody," and that Dr. Greene carried this fault to a greater excess. It is difficult to imagine how Mr. Mason could have stumbled on the assertion that Dr. Croft was the *first composer* who gave into the defect of long and intricate divisions. The use of such divisions was a prevailing fault before the times of Croft and Greene; and, in giving into it, which they certainly did to some extent, these composers merely conformed with the taste of the time. Neither of them indulged in it to a greater degree than Handel did; and, as in his case, their best compositions, and those which will live the longest, are nearly or wholly free from it. From Burney's observations on Greene's anthems, he appears not to have examined those on which the composer's reputation chiefly rests. The full anthem for four voices, "Lord, let me know mine end," which Burney never mentions, is not surpassed, we believe, by anything in the whole range of cathedral music. The opening movement is deeply pathetic; and, though a profound and masterly fugue on two subjects, is as flowing and unconstrained as if written in simple counterpoint. The verse which follows, for two treble voices, "For man walketh in a vain shadow," is of the purest melody, and contains several exquisite touches of feeling; and the concluding chorus, "And now, O Lord, what is my hope," breathes the most

earnest supplication. This beautiful anthem speaks a language which time can neither obscure nor enfeeble. Similar in merit, though opposite in character, is the two-part anthem, "O give thanks;" which, too, is not noticed by Burney. It has the same truth of expression, though its accents are those of joy, chastened by devotion; and the divisions which are introduced in one of the solos are not inconsistent with the character of the movement.

Had Burney's attention been directed to these, and many other anthems which he appears to have overlooked, he never could have said that, as to invention and design, Dr. Greene seldom soars above mediocrity. Even in his solo anthems, where the faults of his age are most apparent, the melody is generally admirable, frequently reminding us of the German and Italian composers of a later period. In the two part anthem, "O God of my righteousness," the treble solo, "I will lay me down in peace," has all the tranquil sweetness, and graceful smoothness of melody, with which Haydn would have treated the subject.

Dr. Greene composed a good deal of secular music, consisting of cantatas, songs, &c. His duet, "Busy, curious, thirsty fly," and several of his songs, are still kept in remembrance.

JOHN TRAVERS is another composer who has not met with justice from our great musical historian. About the year 1725, he became organist of St. Paul's, Covent Garden; and was afterwards appointed organist of the Chapel Royal, which situation he held till his death, in 1758. Burney, speaking of him as a composer for the church, says that "his compositions, however pure the

harmony, can only be ranked with pieces of mechanism, which labour alone may produce without the assistance of genius." Notwithstanding this severe sentence, several of his anthems are still used in our service, and deserve to be so. His two-part anthem, "Ascribe unto the Lord," though the solo parts are too much loaded with divisions, contains melody that is both beautiful and expressive; and the harmony of the final chorus, while it is not deficient in fulness, is simple and natural, and free from that mechanical elaboration which Burney ascribes to the music of this composer. The canzonets of Travers, for one and two voices, were long extremely popular; and one of them "Haste, my Nanette," is still a favourite, both among professional singers and amateurs.

DR. WILLIAM BOYCE, one of the greatest of English musicians, was born in London in 1710. When a boy he was a chorister of St Paul's, and afterwards became a pupil of Dr. Greene, then organist of that cathedral. In 1736, on the death of Mr. Weldon, he was appointed one of the composers to the Chapels Royal. In 1749, at the installation of the duke of Newcastle, as chancellor of the university of Cambridge, he set to music the Installation Ode, written by Mr. Mason, and likewise an anthem; and on this occasion he obtained the honour of a doctor's degree. In 1755, on the death of Dr. Greene, he was appointed master of his majesty's band; and, in 1758, he was chosen as one of the organists of the Chapel Royal, in the room of Travers. In his latter years he became afflicted with the gout, of which he died, in 1779, leaving behind him not only

an exalted reputation as a musician, but the character of a most respectable and amiable man.

Dr. Boyce's cathedral music is of a very high order. The finest of his anthems were published in 1780, by his widow, under the title of "Fifteen Anthems, together with a *Te Deum* and *Jubilate*, in score, composed for the Royal Chapels." Another collection of twelve anthems, with a short service, was published in 1790, also by the author's widow; and six of his anthems, with a *Te Deum* and *Jubilate*, are published in Dr. Arnold's collection of cathedral music. On an examination of these works, it appears evident that Dr. Boyce's style was formed by a profound study of the greatest ecclesiastical composers, not only of England, but of other countries, aided by a discriminating judgment, and a strong original genius. His harmonies, while they are full of ingenuity and learning, have the breadth and massive grandeur which distinguishes the choral works of Handel: his setting of the words is always distinct and emphatic; and his melody is pure and flowing, yet appropriate to the subject, and free from levity. Passages of divisions frequently occur in his solos; but divisions are not *always* to be censured. On the contrary, though they are no longer employed, as of old, without discrimination or meaning, yet they continue to be used by the greatest masters, as legitimate means of musical imitation and expression. It is in this way that they are used by Boyce, in whose anthems they sometimes speak the language of jubilation and joyful thanksgiving, and sometimes imitate the sounds or other phenomena of nature. Examples of

the happy effect of divisions in expressing, by inarticulate sounds, the feelings of thankfulness and joy, may be found in the solo anthem, "Praise the Lord, ye servants," and in the anthem for two voices, "O sing unto the Lord a new song;" and, in the solo anthem, "The Lord is King," the raging of the sea is finely represented by the rolling divisions sung by a bass voice. Such passages as these, not being dictated by the caprice of taste and fashion, but derived from the natural principles of musical language, will never cease to be intelligible. Among Dr. Boyce's cathedral music, the anthems, "By the waters of Babylon," and "Turn thee unto me, O Lord," are remarkable for their pathetic expression. The full anthem for eight voices, "O give thanks unto the Lord," has probably never been surpassed for the wonderful command of harmonical resources which it exhibits, and the grandeur of its effect. The opening movement, for solo voices, in eight real parts, after a few bars of simple counterpoint, assumes the form of a canon in the unison on four separate subjects, carried on with great freedom and clearness, and terminated by a fugue, the subject of which is strongly marked, and treated in a style of masterly simplicity. The verse which follows, for four voices, is remarkable for the graceful and flowing melody of the different parts; and the Hallelujah chorus, in eight parts, intermingled with solo passages, which terminates the whole, is a stupendous effort of genius. It is impossible to listen to music like this without feeling, that even the language of inspiration can be clothed with additional majesty by the sublime strains of our ecclesiastical harmony.

Besides enriching the music of our church by his own compositions, Dr. Boyce conferred on it a great benefit by his invaluable collection of cathedral music, which appeared in 1760, in three volumes. This work, which had been undertaken by Greene, was completed by Boyce. It is a selection of the best productions of the English ecclesiastical composers during the two preceding centuries, and is a monument, not only of the editor's learning, research, and judgment, but of his liberal spirit and zeal in the cause of his art; for, in undergoing the labour and incurring the hazard of this great and expensive publication, he could not have been actuated by any prospect of pecuniary recompense.

Though the reputation of Dr. Boyce rests chiefly on his sacred music, yet his secular compositions have great merit. His serenata of *Solomon*, which was published in 1743, was long popular, and some parts of it are still frequently performed; particularly the air, "Softly rise, O southern breeze," remarkable for its beautiful bassoon accompaniment; and the duet, "Together let us range the fields;" both of which are heard with delight by those who retain their taste for the pure and chaste English style of the last century. He composed the music of an opera entitled *The Chaplet*, which kept its place on the stage for many years; and a number of songs, which were published in various collections. These are now little known; but some of them, if revived, would be found elegant and agreeable novelties.

DR. JAMES NARES was born in 1715. He received his earliest musical education in the Chapel Royal, and afterwards studied under Dr. Pepusch. The place of

organist in York Cathedral was his first preferment. In 1756 he succeeded Dr. Greene in the situation of organist and composer to his majesty; and, about the same time, received a doctor's degree in the university of Cambridge. He died in 1783, in his sixty-eighth year. He was a man of great integrity of character, of benevolent and cheerful disposition, and great attainments in literature. His compositions for the church consist of a collection of twenty anthems, published in 1778, and a morning and evening service, with six anthems, published after his death. These works are entitled to a high place among our cathedral music. They are simple in their construction; the author having, upon principle, avoided elaborate combinations of harmony, and florid melody. "I have been very sparing of divisions," he says, in the preface to the first collection of his anthems, "thinking them too airy for the church; and have rather endeavoured to enforce the sentiment of the words, than to display the art of musical composition." In this he has been successful: his harmony being pure and full, and his melody elegant and expressive. While, however, in adopting this simple style, he properly followed the bent of his own genius, and produced a series of anthems which add to the variety of our cathedral music, by being placed in contrast with more elaborate works, yet we apprehend that the choral music of the church is that which, above every other class, requires the utmost resources of the art of musical composition; and that the profound harmonies, and learned combinations of the ecclesiastical style, impart to it a grave and solemn character which fits it for the offices of religion. It is

its depth and elaboration which form the line of demarcation between the music of our church and that of the every-day world. Deprived of these qualities, its harmony will become trite and common-place, and it will save itself from insipidity only by borrowing the melody of the theatre. By degrees, a verse of an anthem will be set in the style of an opera air, or duct, and the choral part will differ in nothing but the words from a theatrical finale. Such has been the manner in which the music of the church has been ruined in Italy, the country in which it once existed in all its greatness; and such, too, has been the manner in which it has been corrupted in Germany. We are far from saying that Dr. Nares' own productions are deficient in gravity; but, were the principles by which he professed to be guided in their composition, and which are likewise advocated by Mr. Mason*, to be generally adopted by composers of cathedral music, its gradual degeneracy would certainly ensue.

Dr. Nares composed a set of catches, canons, and glees, dedicated to the earl of Mornington, and a set of beautiful English duets.

JAMES KENT was born in 1700, and received his musical education in the Chapel Royal, under the care of Dr. Croft. After quitting the Chapel, he became organist to Trinity College, Cambridge, and, in 1737, was appointed organist of the Cathedral of Winchester, the place of his birth, which situation he held till his death, in 1776. In his cathedral music he followed the style of Dr. Croft, though his compositions are less

* *Essay on Church Music.*

elaborate, and his melodies more free from divisions, and of a more modern cast, than those of his master. His anthems are in frequent use, particularly "Hear my prayer," which is very beautiful and expressive. His anthems, "Hearken unto this, O man," "My song shall be of mercy," "O Lord, our Governor," and several others, are also much esteemed. Kent not only adopted the style of Dr. Croft, but even borrowed his ideas, and avowed it, as if it were a matter of course. He once said to a friend who was present at the rehearsal of one of his anthems, "I know your thoughts: there is the same passage in Dr. Croft; but could I have done better than copy him in that case?" This ingenuousness was commendable; but, though *quotation* is allowable in literature, where it can be always avowed, it is quite inadmissible in music, where it cannot be distinguished from plagiarism.

JONATHAN BATTISHILL, though chiefly known by his secular music, was also an excellent composer for the church. He was born in 1738, and educated in the choir of St. Paul's Cathedral, and was organist successively of several churches in London. He died in 1801. Four of his anthems are published in Page's *Harmonia Sacra*. They are all excellent, particularly the full anthem for seven voices, "Call to remembrance, O Lord," which is a perfect model for this species of composition. Nothing can be more clear and unembarrassed than the treatment of these numerous parts; the melody of each voice is flowing and natural; and the combined effect of the whole is admirable. The middle movement, for three voices, "O remember not

the sins of my youth," is full of that touching expression for which Battishill's music of every class is remarkable. The glees and rounds of this composer are well known to every lover of English vocal music. His songs and ballads long preserved their popularity; and it is to be regretted that such beautiful melodies as, "When Damon languished at my feet," "Ye shepherds and nymphs," and "Kate of Aberdeen," should ever be forgotten.

As a very eminent and popular composer, DR. SAMUEL ARNOLD demands notice in another place; but he is also entitled to a high rank among our ecclesiastical musicians. In early life, he derived, from his intercourse with Handel, a taste for sacred music; and his oratorios, *The Cure of Saul*, *Abimelech*, *The Resurrection*, *The Prodigal Son*, and *The Shunamite Woman*, are described by his biographer, Dr. Burney, as being worthy of the disciple of so great a master as Handel. The oratorio of *The Redemption* was compiled by him from the works of Handel; and it is through the medium of this oratorio that several of Handel's finest Italian opera songs, introduced into it with English words, are still known to the public. On the death of Dr. Nares, Dr. Arnold was chosen his successor, as organist and composer to his majesty; and, while in this situation, composed a number of services and anthems for the use of the Chapel Royal, none of which, though some of them are beautiful and masterly, have been published. In connexion with his character of an ecclesiastical musician, it is proper to mention his edition of the works of Handel, and his collection of

cathedral music, forming a continuation to that of Boyce; two magnificent works, which are monuments of his zeal, energy, and judgment.

SAMUEL WESLEY, one of the greatest musicians of whom England can boast, was not only possessed of transcendant powers as an organist, but an eminent ecclesiastical composer. He was, too, a most remarkable instance of youthful precocity ripening into the highest excellence. He was the son of Charles Wesley, the brother of the celebrated John Wesley, the founder of the Methodists, and was born at Bristol on the 24th of February, 1766.* He, and his brother Charles (who also became a distinguished organist) both showed, in infancy, their extraordinary musical genius, of which an account has been published by the Honorable Davies Barrington. The following, among other particulars, were communicated to Mr. Barrington by the father of the boys.

Samuel Wesley's first impressions of harmony were received from the music lessons given to his elder brother Charles. "The first thing," says the father, "which drew our attention was the great delight he took in hearing his brother play; whenever Mr. Kelway came to teach him, Sam constantly attended, and accompanied Charles *on the chair*. He was so excessively fond of Scarlatti, that if ever Charles began playing his lesson before Sam was called, he would cry and roar as if he had been beat. As his brother employed the evenings in Handel's oratorios, Sam was always at his elbow listening, and joining with his voice; nay,

* His birth-day was the same with that of Handel, who was born on the 24th of February, 1684.

he would sometimes presume to find fault with his playing, when we thought he could know nothing of the matter.

“He was between four and five years old when he got hold of the oratorio of ‘Samson,’ and by that alone taught himself to read words: soon after he taught himself to write. From this time he sprang up like a mushroom, and when turned of five he could read perfectly well; and had all the airs, recitatives, and chorusses of ‘Samson’ and the ‘Messiah,’ both words and notes, by heart. Whenever he heard his brother begin to play, he would tell us whose music it was (whether Handel, Corelli, Scarlatti, or any other) and at what part of what lesson, sonata, or overture.

“Before he could write he composed much music. His custom was to lay the words of an oratorio before him, and sing them all over. Thus he set (extempore for most part) ‘Ruth,’ ‘Gideon,’ ‘Manasses,’ and the ‘Death of Abel.’ We observed, when he repeated the same words, it was always to the same tunes. The airs of ‘Ruth’ in particular, he made before he was six years old, laid them up in his memory till he was eight, and then wrote them down. I have seen him open his Prayer book, and sing the ‘Te Deum,’ or an anthem from some psalm, to his own music, accompanying it with the harpsichord. This he often did, after he had learned to play by note, which Mr. Williams, a young organist of Bristol, taught him between six and seven.

“How and when he learned counterpoint I can hardly tell; but without being ever taught it, he soon wrote in parts. He was full eight years old when Dr.

Boyce came to see us; and accosted me with, 'Sir, I hear you have got an English Mozart in your house; young Linley tells me wonderful things of him.' I called Sam, to answer for himself. He had by this time scrawled down his oratorio of 'Ruth.' The Doctor looked over it very carefully, and seemed highly pleased with the performance. Some of his words were: 'These airs are some of the prettiest I have seen: this boy writes by nature as true a bass as I can by rule and study. There is no man in England has two such sons,' &c. He bade us let him run on *ad libitum*, without any check of rules or masters. After this, whenever the Doctor visited us, Sam ran to him with his song, sonata, or anthem; and the Doctor examined them with astonishing patience and delight.

"As soon as Sam had quite finished his oratorio he sent it as a present to the Doctor, who immediately honoured him with the following note:—

"*To Mr. Samuel Wesley.* Dr. Boyce's compliments and thanks to his very ingenious brother composer, Mr. S. W., and is very much pleased and obliged by the possession of the oratorio of 'Ruth,' which he shall preserve with the utmost care, as the most curious product of his musical library."

The following are some of the particulars given by M. Barrington from his own observation. The whole account is highly interesting, and in many respects very valuable.

"I first had an opportunity of being witness of Master Samuel Wesley's great musical talents at the latter end of 1775, when he was nearly ten years old.

"To speak of him first as a performer on the harpsi-

chord: he was then able to execute the most difficult lessons for the instrument at sight, for his fingers never wanted the guidance of the eye in the most rapid and desultory passages. But he not only did ample justice to the composition in neatness and precision, but entered into its true taste, which may be easily believed by the numbers who have heard him play extemporary lessons in the style of most of the eminent masters. He not only executed crabbed compositions thus at sight, but was equally ready to transpose into any keys, even a fourth, and if it was a sonata for two trebles and a bass, the part of the first treble being set before him, he would immediately add an extemporary bass and second treble to it. Having happened to mention this readiness in the boy to Bremner (the printer of music in the Strand), he told me that he had some lessons which were supposed to have been composed for Queen Elizabeth; but which none of the harpsichord masters could execute, and would consequently gravel the young performer. I however desired that he would let me carry one of these compositions to him by way of trial, which I accordingly did, when the boy immediately placed it upon his desk, and was sitting down to play it; but I stopped him, by mentioning the difficulties he would soon encounter, and that therefore he must cast his eye over the music before he made the attempt. Having done this very rapidly (for he is a devourer of a score, and conceives at once the effect of the different parts), he said that Bremner was in the right, for that there were two or three passages which he could not play at sight, as they were so queer and awkward, but that he had no notion

of not trying; and though he boggled at these parts of the lesson he executed them cleanly at the second practice. I then asked how he approved of the composition? to which he answered, 'not at all, though he might differ from a queen; and that attention had not been paid to some of the established rules.' He then pointed out the particular passages to which he objected, and I stated them to Bremner, who allowed that the boy was right; but that some of the great composers had occasionally taken the same liberties.

"The next time I saw Master Wesley, I mentioned Bremner's defence to what he had blamed; on which he immediately answered, 'that when such excellent rules were broken, the composer should take care that these licences produced a good effect; whereas these passages had a very bad one.' I need not dwell on the great penetration, acuteness, and judgment, of this answer. Lord Mornington, indeed, (who hath so deep a knowledge of music) hath frequently told me, that he always wished to consult Master Wesley upon any difficulty in composition; as he knew no one who gave so immediate and satisfactory information.

"Though he was always willing to play the compositions of others, yet for the most part he amused himself with extemporaneous effusions of his own most extraordinary musical inspiration, which unfortunately were totally forgotten in a few minutes; whereas his memory was most tenacious of what had been published by others. His invention in varying passages was inexhaustible; and I have myself heard him give more than fifty variations on a known melody, all of which were not only different from each other, but

showed excellent taste and judgement. In his extemporary compositions he frequently hazarded bold and uncommon modulations; so that I have seen that most excellent musician Mr. Charles Wesley (his elder brother) tremble for him. Sam however always extricated himself from the difficulties in which he appeared to be involved, in the most masterly manner, being always possessed of that serene confidence which a thorough knowledge inspires, though surrounded by musical professors, who could not deem it arrogance.

“And here I will give a proof of the goodness of his heart, and delicacy of his feelings:—I desired him to compose an easy melody in the minor third, for an experiment on little Crotch, and that he would go with me to hear what that very extraordinary child was capable of. Crotch was not in good humour, and Master Wesley submitted, amongst other things, to play upon a cracked violin, in order to please him; the company, however, having found out who he was, pressed him very much to play upon the organ, which Sam constantly declined. As this was contrary to his usual readiness in obliging any person who had curiosity to hear him, I asked him afterwards what might be the occasion of his refusal; when he told me, ‘that he thought it would look like wishing to shine at little Crotch’s expense.’

“Every one knows, that any material alteration in the construction of an organ, which varies the position of certain notes, must at first embarrass the player, though a most expert one. I carried Sam, however, to the Temple organ, which hath quarter notes, with the management of which he was as ready as if he

had made use of such an instrument all his life. I need scarcely say how much more difficult it must be to play passages which must be executed, not by the fingers, but the feet. Now the organ at the Savoy hath a complete octave of pedals, with the half-notes; on which part Sam appeared as little a novice as if he had been accustomed to it for years. Nay, he made a very good and regular *shake on the pedals*, by way of experiment, for he had too much taste and judgment to suppose that it would have a good effect.

“He was able to sing at sight (which commonly requires so much instruction with those even who are of a musical disposition) from the time of first knowing his notes; his voice was by no means strong, and it cannot yet be pronounced how it may turn out; his more favourite songs were those of Handel, composed for a bass voice, as ‘Honour and Arms,’ &c.

“He hath lately practised much upon the violin, on which he bids fair for being a most capital performer. Happening one day to find him thus employed, I asked him how long he had played that morning; his answer was, ‘three or four hours; which Giardini had found necessary.’ The delicacy of his ear is likewise very remarkable, of which I shall give an instance or two:—having been at Bach’s concert, he was much satisfied both with the compositions and performers; but said, ‘the musical pieces were ill arranged, as four had been played successively which were all in the same key.’ He was desired to compose a march for one of the regiments of guards; which he did to the approbation of all who ever heard it, and a distinguished officer of the royal navy declared, that it was

a movement which would probably inspire steady and serene courage, when the enemy was approaching. As I thought the boy would like to hear this march performed, I carried him to the parade at the proper time, when it had the honour of beginning the military concert. The piece being finished, I asked him whether it was executed to his satisfaction? to which he replied, 'by no means;' and I then immediately introduced him to the band (which consisted of very tall and stout musicians), that he might set them right. On this, Sam immediately told them, 'that they had not done justice to his composition.' To which they answered the urchin with both astonishment and contempt, by 'your composition!' Sam, however, replied with great serenity, 'yes, my composition!' which I confirmed. They then stared, and severally made their excuses, by protesting, that they had copied accurately from the manuscript which had been put into their hands. This he most readily allowed to the hautbois and bassoons, but said it was the French horns who were in fault; who making the same defence, he insisted upon the original score being produced, and showing them their mistake, ordered the march to be played again, which they submitted to with as much deference as they would have shown to Handel. This concert of wind instruments begins on the parade at about five minutes after nine, and ends at five minutes after ten; when the guards proceed to St. James's. I stayed with him till this time; and asked him what he thought of the concluding movement, which he said deserved commendation; but that it was very injudicious to make it the finishing piece, because as it must neces-

sarily continue till the clock of the Horse-guards had struck ten, it should have been recollected that the tone of the clock did not correspond with the key-note of the march.

“I shall now attempt to give some account of this most extraordinary boy considered as a composer, and first of his extemporary flights. If left to himself when he played on the organ, there were oftener traces of Handel’s style than any other master, and if on the harpsichord, of Scarlatti; at other times, however, his voluntaries were original and singular. After he had seen or heard a few pieces of any composer, he was fully possessed of his peculiarities, which, if at all striking, he could instantly imitate at the word of command, as well as the general flow and turn of the composition. Thus I have heard him frequently play extemporary lessons, which, without prejudice to their musical names, might have been supposed to have been those of Abel, Vento, Schobert, and Bach.

“Having found that the greater part of those who heard him would not believe but that his voluntaries had been practised before, I always endeavoured that some person present (and more particularly so if he was a professor) should give him the subject upon which he was to work, which always afforded the convincing and irrefragable proof, as he then composed upon the idea suggested by others, to which ordeal it is believed few musicians in Europe would submit. The more difficult the subject, (as if it was two or three bars of the beginning of a fugue) the more cheerfully he undertook it, as he always knew he was equal to the attempt, be it never so arduous.

“I can only refer to one printed proof of his abilities as a composer, which is a set of eight lessons for the harpsichord, and which appeared in 1777, about the same time that he became so known to the musical world that his portrait was engraved, which is a very strong resemblance. Some of these lessons have passages which are rather too difficult for common performers, and therefore they are not calculated for a general vogue. His father, the Rev. Mr. Wesley, will permit any one to see the score of his oratorio of Ruth, which he really composed at six years of age, but did not *write* till he was eight; his quickness in thus giving utterance to his musical ideas is amazingly great; and, notwithstanding the rapidity, he seldom makes a blot or a mistake. Numbers of other compositions, and almost of all kinds, may be likewise examined; particularly an anthem to the following words, which I selected for him, and which had been performed at the Chapel Royal, and St. Paul’s: ‘1. O Lord God of Hosts, how long wilt thou be angry at the prayer of thy people? 2. Turn thee again, O Lord, and we shall be saved! 3. For thou art a great God, and a great King above all gods.’ The first part of this anthem composed for a single tenor; the second a duet for two boys; and the third a chorus.”

The expectations raised by these wonderful indications of early genius were fully realized. Wesley became the greatest of English organists and the greatest of English composers for his instrument. As an extemporaneous performer he was unrivalled; and his numerous voluntaries and other compositions for the organ place him on a level with the greatest mas-

ters of the German school. As may be supposed, he venerated Sebastian Bach, and followed in his footsteps; and he was the first among English musicians who fully entered into the spirit, and appreciated the greatness of that illustrious man. In a memoir of Wesley which appeared at the time of his death*, his biographer mentions a circumstance which ought to be kept in view by those who may be misled by Dr. Burney's very erroneous estimate of the character of the great German composer. "Wesley," says the writer, "was thirty-five years old when he sat down to study that master, a somewhat remarkable circumstance in a person of his temperament and at that time of life. After he had mastered the fugues, the difficulty was to make people take to them, on account of the prejudice raised against them by Dr. Burney, in his *History and Tour in Germany* (vide vols. 3 and 4 of the former work). Wesley thought his only plan was to go at once to Burney and play them to him. When he finished, Burney said, 'I have been mistaken and misled; the copies I have are not like these.' And it turned out that the manuscripts he had purchased in Germany were so imperfectly copied that nothing could be made of them. From that day Burney retracted the opinion he had pronounced upon Bach."

Besides his organ music, Wesley composed many anthems, motets, and other pieces in the ecclesiastical style. But neither these, nor his instrumental works have been sufficiently appreciated during his life-time. Like his great predecessor Sebastian Bach, Wesley was in advance of his age: the powers of the organ were

* *Musical World*, October, 1837.

little known in England, and few were able to fathom the depths of those compositions which are calculated to develop those powers. His vocal music, too, from the peculiarity of its style and structure, presents great difficulties to the performer. "Although his organ compositions," says the biographer already referred to, "abound with learning and ingenuity, and overflow with feeling and expression, still his great strength lies in his choral works. It has been observed by Sir George Smart that, in order to perform Bach's choral works, one must first *create the singers*. The remark is perfectly true, and applies with equal force to many of Wesley's chorusses. It is the application of organ phraseology to the voice, which marks the school, and which requires long training before justice can be done to these beautiful compositions. Nevertheless they *can* be sung; those of Bach are performed; and England ought not to allow Germany the opportunity of boasting that she first brought to light the great works of England's best and brightest musician."

Wesley died on the 11th of October, 1837, in his seventy-second year. With many excellent qualities, he was imprudent and eccentric in his character and habits; and from this cause, joined to the decay of his health, his great talents had long been in a great measure lost to the world. His son, Mr. Samuel Sebastian Wesley, the eminent organist of Exeter cathedral, inherits his father's genius, and resembles him in musical learning and attainments.

DR. WILLIAM CROTCH, like Mozart and Wesley, is an instance of precocious juvenile talent fully developed in after-life. This great musician was born at

Norwich in 1775; and, in his earliest infancy, displayed such singular musical dispositions, that he attracted the notice of Dr. Burney, whose account of him, before he was four years of age, published in the *Philosophical Transactions* for 1779, excited the attention of the philosophical as well as the musical world. An interesting account of him, about the same period, is also given by the Honourable] Daines Barrington. When about two years old, Crotch heard the tune of "God save the King" played on his father's organ, and became so restless and unruly, that his mother, imagining he wanted to get at the organ, placed him at the keys, which he immediately began to strike, and, after a little while, made an evident approach towards the air. Before he rose, he made himself master of the first part; next day, with his brother's assistance, he played the treble of the second part; and on the third day, learned to play the bass. Before he was four years of age, the accuracy of his ear was such, that he was able, not only to name any note that was struck, but to tell in what key a tune was played; and he was also able, with perfect facility, to transpose the tunes which he himself played into any key, even the most remote. As he grew older, his musical attainments rapidly increased, while, at the same time, he possessed a general intelligence beyond his age. He discovered a genius and inclination for drawing, almost as soon as for music. Painting has continued to be his favourite recreation, and he has acquired a proficiency in it of which few amateurs can boast.

When he was eleven or twelve years of age he resided at Cambridge, and did the duty of organist at several

of the chapels. In 1788 he removed to Oxford, and began his studies with a view to the church; but he afterwards resumed the musical profession, and was appointed organist of Christ Church, in 1790. In 1797 he became professor of music in that university, and, in 1799, obtained the degree of doctor of music. On the establishment of the Royal Academy of Music, in 1823, he was nominated Principal of that institution.

Dr. Crotch's great work is the oratorio of *Palestine*, the poetry of which is the beautiful prize poem of Bishop Heber. In this oratorio, Dr. Crotch has displayed a grandeur and originality of conception worthy of his most illustrious predecessors, and has united, in the happiest manner, the depth and severity of the old ecclesiastical masters, with the graceful and flowing melody and orchestral effects of the modern school. The chorusses are noble and majestic; the concluding chorus, in particular, "Worthy is the Lamb," possesses the simple and massive grandeur of Handel. The quartet, "Lo, star-led chiefs," is not surpassed by anything in the works of the greatest masters. Whether considered with reference to the delicious melody of the different parts, or the exquisite harmony produced by their combination, this movement may be regarded as a perfect composition. Several of the airs are exceedingly beautiful and expressive. It is surprising, and much to be regretted, that this work, which does so much honour to the English school of music, is so rarely performed.

Dr. Crotch is the author of several excellent anthems, and other pieces of sacred music. His motet,

“Methinks I hear the full celestial choir,” is generally known. As a glee-writer, and a composer for the organ, on which he is a great performer, his talents are of a very high order. He has written some useful elementary treatises; but in works of this kind, we are still much behind the Germans and French.

Several of our other living musicians have distinguished themselves by their compositions for the church. Mr. ATTWOOD, the present organist of St. Paul's Cathedral, besides other works of this class, is the author of two magnificent anthems; with full orchestral accompaniments, written for, and performed on the occasions of the coronation of George the Fourth and his late majesty. Mr. HORSLEY, one of the most eminent of our glee-writers, has also composed several services and anthems of great merit; and Mr. ADAMS, a most masterly performer on the organ, has published a number of voluntaries, in the grand and solemn style which belongs to that instrument.

England is thus entitled to boast that her cathedral music is superior to that of any other country, and that, while the music of the church in Italy, and even Germany, has degenerated, ours retains the solemn grandeur of the olden time. Our services and anthems, too, are more *vocal* than the masses and motets of the Romish church; for, in these, the voices are very frequently subordinate to the rich and powerful instrumental symphony which accompanies them. Our cathedral music is accompanied by the organ only; a kind of accompaniment that is not liable to the changes which orchestral music is constantly undergoing, and, from its grave and solid style, is calculated to support and

enrich the vocal harmony without withdrawing the attention from it. The more independent vocal music is of instrumental accompaniment, the less it will be subject to the mutability of taste and fashion; and this is one cause of the durability of our cathedral music. Its choral harmony, too, is of surpassing grandeur, when performed with sufficient vocal strength; but, unfortunately, this is seldom the case in our cathedrals and churches. The body of vocal sound being too feeble to fill the edifice, the organist endeavours to supply the defect by the loudness of his playing. But two and two do not always make four. By doubling the quantity of vocal sound, the greatness of its effect may be doubled: not so when the added quantity of sound is instrumental. This addition, indeed, frequently subtracts from the effect of the whole; for the listener is painfully employed in straining his ear to separate the tones and words of the choristers from the mass of instrumental sounds in which they are smothered. The choral establishments of the cathedrals are, at present, inadequate to do justice to the grand and solemn music which they have to perform.

CHAPTER XVI.

COMPOSERS FOR THE ENGLISH STAGE DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY. — PEPUSCH. — GALLIARD. — CAREY — LAMPE. — DR. ARNE. — MICHAEL ARNE. — LINLEY. — JACKSON. — ARNOLD. — DIBDIN. — SHIELD. — STORACE.

IN taking a view of the composers for the theatre who flourished in England during the last century, the first who presents himself is DR. JOHN CHRISTOPHER PEPUSCH.

This eminent musician was born at Berlin in 1667. His father, a Protestant minister in that city, observing his early propensity, gave him an excellent musical education, by which he profited so much, that, at the age of fourteen he had acquired considerable reputation for learning and skill in the art. He came to England about the year 1700, and resided in this country for the remainder of his life. He was at first engaged at Drury-lane theatre, and assisted in preparing for the stage the operas that were performed there; parts of some of which appear to have been composed by him. He devoted himself, however, more to the study of the ancient Greek writers on music, than to the practice of the art; and his inquiries, however unprofitable in other respects, gained him the character of a profound musician, and the honour of a doctor's degree, conferred on him by the university of Oxford, in 1713. In order to prevent the music of the great masters of the preceding

century from falling into oblivion, he formed a plan, in which he was assisted by many of the principal *dilettanti* of that period, for the establishment of an academy for the performance of ancient vocal and instrumental music ; an institution, which, under the name of *The Academy of Ancient Music*, existed till the year 1792.

About the year 1724, Dr. Berkeley, afterwards bishop of Cloyne, having formed a plan for erecting a college in the Bermuda Islands, engaged Dr. Pepusch as one of the members of the projected establishment. He and his associates embarked for the place of their destination ; but the ship was wrecked and the undertaking abandoned. After his return to England, he married the celebrated singer, Margarita de l'Epine, who brought him a fortune of ten thousand pounds ; but the possession of affluence did not cause any relaxation in his pursuits. He assisted Gay to select the national airs in *The Beggar's Opera*, to which he composed basses ; and he wrote also an overture to the opera. This profligate production is said to have been intended to ridicule the Italian opera, which was then becoming very fashionable in England ; though, if this was its object, it certainly was not accomplished, as there is not the slightest resemblance, in any particular, between *The Beggar's Opera*, and the pieces of the Italian stage, either of that or any other period. It had an unprecedented success, owing partly, no doubt, to its simple and beautiful ballads, but much more to its wit and licentiousness. Its original popularity is not surprising, considering the state of the theatre at that period ; but its still continuing to be performed, in defiance of public decency,

says little for the boasted improvement in the morality of the stage.

Dr. Pepusch was an able teacher of the science of music, and was much employed in that capacity. Among his pupils was the earl of Abercorn, who is said to have afterwards published anonymously a *Treatise on Harmony*, compiled from the written instructions given him by his master. Dr. Pepusch complained of this, as a breach of confidence; but it did not dissolve the friendship between Lord Abercorn and him,—a circumstance which makes it doubtful whether this surreptitious publication was the act of that nobleman. The real author afterwards published an edition of the work much improved and enlarged. It was very valuable at that period; and some parts of it may still be perused with advantage.

His principal compositions are twelve cantatas, in the style of Alessandro Scarlatti, and the other Italian writers of that school. These were very popular when they appeared, but are now forgotten, with the exception of *Alexis*, which is still performed with applause at our concerts.

In 1737, Dr. Pepusch obtained the situation of organist to the Charter-house, and spent the rest of his life in the tranquil enjoyment of his favourite studies. He was chosen a member of the Royal Society in 1746; an honour to which his great learning justly entitled him. He died in 1752, at the age of eighty-five.

JOHN ERNEST GALLIARD, a native of Zell, was a favourite composer for the theatres in the beginning of the last century. His music is now forgotten; though

his pretty hunting-song, "With early horn," has been sung within our remembrance.

HENRY CAREY was a poet and a dramatist, as well as a musician, though his musical attainments were limited to a happy vein of melody which enabled him to produce airs, some of which are popular to this day. The pretty ballad of "Sally in our alley" is his, both words and music ; and it probably owes its natural simplicity to the circumstance of its being founded on a real incident.

A benefit of Carey's is announced in the *Daily Post*, of December 3rd, 1730, in terms which give an amusing idea of the manners of the time. After naming the play, which was *Greenwich Park*, and the additional entertainments of singing, particularly a dialogue of Purcell, by Carey and Miss Rafter, (afterwards the celebrated Mrs. Clive,) and a cantata of Carey's, by Miss Rafter, there is an apology from Carey for "The tragedy of half an act" not being performed ; but a promise is made of indemnification by the entertainments between the acts. Then there is the following editorial paragraph :—"At our friend *Harry Carey's* benefit to-night, the powers of music, poetry, and painting, assemble in his behalf,—he being an admirer of the three sister arts : the body of musicians meet in the Haymarket, whence they march in great order, preceded by a magnificent moving organ, in form of a pageant, accompanied by all the kinds of musical instruments ever in use from Tubal Cain to the present day ; a great multitude of booksellers, authors, and painters, form themselves into a body at Temple-bar, whence they march with great decency to Covent-

Garden, preceded by a little army of printers'-devils with their proper instruments: here the two bodies of music and poetry are joined by the brothers of the pencil; when, after taking some refreshment at the Bedford Arms, they march in solemn procession to the theatre amidst an innumerable crowd of spectators."

His mock "tragedy in half an act," the well-known *Chrononhotonthologos*, was first performed at the Haymarket theatre, in 1734. The lapse of a century has not diminished the freshness of this admirable piece, which is not inferior to Fielding's *Tom Thumb*, as a satire upon the inflation and bombast of the tragic stage. In 1737, the *Dragon of Wantley*, written by Carey, and set by Lampe, "after the Italian manner," was produced at Covent-Garden. This piece which is a happy burlesque of the Italian opera, was as successful as the *Beggar's Opera* had been. The drama, which is irresistibly ludicrous, is still well known; but the music, notwithstanding its excellence, is forgotten.

Carey committed suicide in 1743. He does not appear to have been vicious or extravagant in his habits; and his dramatic pieces and songs, though full of humour, are untainted with licentiousness. He was, however, always indigent; and embarrassed circumstances probably led to the melancholy termination of his life.

JOHN FREDERICK LAMPE, the composer of the *Dragon of Wantley*, was a native of Saxony. He came to England about the year 1726, and was a popular composer for the theatres. Another opera of his, also written by Carey, called *Amelia*, was produced in 1732, with great success. He died in London in 1751.

THOMAS AUGUSTINE ARNE was the son of an

upholsterer, in King-street, Covent-Garden, who has been immortalized by Addison, as the master of the house in which the Indian kings resided during their visit to London, so humorously described in *The Spectator*. Arne received a good education, and was intended by his father for the law ; but his musical propensity showed itself at a very early age, and soon entirely engrossed his mind. To gratify his passion for music, he used to avail himself of the privilege of a servant, by borrowing a livery, and going into the upper gallery of the Opera-house, which was then appropriated to domestics. He contrived to hide a spinet in his room, upon which, after muffling the strings with a handkerchief, he used to practise during the night. He was articled for three years as a clerk to a lawyer ; but devoted much more of his attention to practising on the spinet and violin, and studying composition, than to reading law books and engrossing on parchment. He, however, served out his time ; but soon afterwards, his father happening to call at a gentleman's house in the neighbourhood, who happened to have a musical party, was shown into the room, where to his amazement, he beheld his son in the act of playing the first fiddle. Finding it vain to contend with an irresistible propensity, his father yielded to it and allowed him to receive regular musical instructions.

His first work was the music to Addison's *Rosamond*, which was produced in 1733, with very great success. His sister, afterwards the celebrated Mrs. Cibber, performed the principal character. He next composed music for Fielding's *Tom Thumb*, which he got transformed into a burlesque opera, in the Italian manner.

In this, too, he was successful, the piece having been performed many nights successively.

In 1738, Arne established his reputation as a dramatic composer, by the manner in which he set Milton's *Comus*. The music of this opera was found to be so light, graceful, and original, that it was received with the utmost delight; and even at the present day, the beautiful airs, "Sweet Echo," "Come, ever smiling liberty," and "Now Phœbus sinketh in the west," are heard with undiminished pleasure. The poetry of *Comus*, charming as it is in the closet, is heavy on the stage; and for this reason it is now rarely performed.

In 1740, Arne married Miss Cecilia Young, a vocal performer of considerable reputation, which continued to increase after her marriage. He afterwards produced his masques of *Britannia* and the *Judgment of Paris*, the opera of *Eliza*, and the afterpiece of *Thomas and Sally*. In 1745, Mrs. Arne being engaged as principal singer at Vauxhall, her husband began to compose for that place of entertainment; and his numerous songs, duets, and other vocal pieces, sung at Vauxhall, spread over the whole kingdom, and had great influence in forming the public taste for vocal melody.

The two oratorios of *Abel* and *Judith*, which Arne produced after this period, were not successful. His musical conceptions were not sufficiently great, nor his learning sufficiently profound, for a species of composition in which, too, he had to contend with the gigantic strength of Handel. About this time he received the degree of doctor of music from the university of Oxford.

In 1762, he produced the most celebrated of his works, the opera of *Artaxerxes*. The words of this opera are a

close, but a bald and feeble translation, executed by himself, of the *Artaserse* of Metastasio ; and the music is constructed in the Italian manner of that day, consisting entirely of recitative, airs, and duets. The success of this opera was complete. Its reception was enthusiastic ; and from that time almost to the present, it has kept possession of the lyrical stage.

The popular opera of *Love in a Village*, which consists of airs selected from the works of Italian and English composers, contains a number of songs by Arne ; and he is understood to have arranged the music of this piece, and prepared it for performance.

Dr. Arne's latest productions were the opera of the *Fairies* ; the music to Mason's tragedies of *Elfrida* and *Caractacus* ; additions to the music of Purcell in *King Arthur* ; songs of Shakspeare ; and music for the Stratford Jubilee. He died on the 5th of March, 1778, and was buried in the church of St. Paul, Covent Garden.

Arne is undoubtedly one of the brightest stars in the constellation of English musicians. Though he has been surpassed by some of our composers in learning and command of the resources of harmony, and though he is below Purcell in vigour and impassioned expression, yet he possessed a rich vein of pure melody, the native produce of his mind, and not derived from his predecessors or contemporaries, either English or foreign. His melody, too, is suited to the accents of our language, and the genius of our nation. It at once pleases every English ear, and is grateful to every English heart ; and hence a popularity more extensive and permanent than has yet fallen to the lot of any English composer. Of

his works, the most beautiful, in our opinion, is *Comus*, in the production of which he followed only the dictates of his own genius and feeling. *Artaxerxes*, indeed, has been successful in an unparalleled degree, and, in many respects, deserves the favour which it has so long enjoyed. The composer's design was to introduce upon the English stage the fashionable style of the Italian opera; and he therefore produced airs made up of the Italian *bravura* passages of the day, in order to enable the English singers, for whom he wrote, to contend with their foreign rivals in feats of execution. While, however, the *great* songs in the piece are written in this manner, there are others of a totally different character—songs in which Arne, losing sight of his Italian models, falls back into his own natural English style. Such are the beautiful airs, “If o’er the cruel tyrant,” “In infancy our hopes and fears,” and “Water parted from the sea.” The opening duet, “Fair Aurora,” is a charming imitation of the simpler Italian style of that period. The attempt to apply Italian recitative to English dialogue was unsuccessful. Italian speech can be made to take a musical form by merely enforcing and heightening the natural accents and inflections of the language; and thus the dialogue of the Italian opera may be sung, or rather spoken, in recitative: but in no other language is this practicable; and in English, German, and French, it is only where the natural inflexions of the voice are supposed to be strengthened by the influence of emotion or passion, that recitative can be used with effect, or even without absurdity. Hence, in the German opera, *simple recitative* is very rarely used. The ordinary dialogue is merely spoken, and it is only when the actor is supposed to

give vent to his feelings in broken phrases and passionate exclamations, that *accompanied recitative* is employed. Though the recitative of *Artaxerxes*, accordingly, has passed current in consequence of the popularity of the airs, no other English composer has ever made the experiment, unless in the way of burlesque.*

Artaxerxes has been frequently chosen for the *debut* of young female singers, and the success of the *debutante* has been attended with the run of the piece. The part of *Mandane* was never so splendidly performed as by Mrs. Billington, who charmed the public as much by the sweetness and grace which she sang the beautiful and simple airs, as she astonished them by the power and compass of her voice, and the brilliancy of her execution, in the bravuras. More recently it has afforded triumphs to Miss Stephens, Miss Tree, and Miss Paton; but it is now very rarely performed: and, notwithstanding its great beauties, its defects as a whole will probably prevent it from regaining its popularity.

The drama is feeble and vapid. Metastasio's meagre plot remains, but there is not a vestige of his sweet and graceful poetry. The music is in an obsolete form, long since abandoned as unfit for dramatic purposes: and, though we, in England, may have greater constancy in matters of taste than the more mercurial people of the south, yet it is no disparagement to the genius of our countryman, to expect that his production shall at last go the way of the beautiful works of the Pergolesis, the Galuppi, and the Jomellis, upon the model of which it was constructed.

Notwithstanding the immense popularity which Dr. Arne has so long enjoyed, it is remarkable that, even in his own time, only two among all his numerous pieces were decidedly successful. Many of them failed entirely, not from want of merit in the music, but in the words, of which he himself was too frequently the author. But the best songs in all his pieces, and his compositions for Vauxhall, &c., have diffused themselves so extensively, and are so rooted in public favour, that their popularity will probably be lasting, even should *Comus* and *Artaxerxes* disappear from the stage. It will be long before the beautiful airs which we have already mentioned;—the songs, “Gentle youth,” and “Ah, had I been by fate decreed,” in *Love in a Village*; “Where the bee sucks,” in the *Tempest*; “Under the green-wood tree,” and “When daisies pied,” in *As you Like it*,—with many others, shall be forgotten by the lovers of pure and genuine English melody. Though not very profound, yet Arne was an able harmonist. The scores of his operas are not behind the state of orchestral composition in his day; and his instrumental music (particularly his harpsichord lessons,) possesses considerable merit. He is, too, the author of some good glees and catches; for which species of composition he obtained several prizes from the Catch Club.

Dr. Arne's son, MICHAEL ARNE, gained considerable reputation as a dramatic composer. His opera of *Cymon* was long popular. He was a singular, and perhaps, in the eighteenth century, a solitary instance of infatuation on the subject of the philosopher's stone, in the pursuit of which chimera he built a laboratory,

and involved himself in much expense. He opened his eyes, however, in time to save himself from ruin.

THOMAS LINLEY, as a dramatic composer, obtained a popularity little inferior to that of Arne. He was born at Bath, where he received his musical education, and resided during a considerable part of his life. For many seasons he conducted the Bath concerts, of which his daughter Eliza, afterwards Mrs. Sheridan, and her sister Mary, afterwards Mrs. Tiekell, were the most distinguished ornaments. Both these ladies were beautiful and accomplished; but the elder appears to have united exquisite musical talents to a beauty almost angelic, and a mind possessed of every virtue. The romantic history of her marriage with Mr. Sheridan is very generally known. From her marriage in 1772, till her death, twenty years afterwards, she was truly her husband's guardian angel; and, had she been spared to him, his character might probably have been saved from degradation, and the close of his life from the extremity of wretchedness.*

* The sketch of this lady's character, given by Moore in his *Life of Sheridan*, is extremely beautiful. "There has seldom," he says, "existed a finer combination of all those qualities that attract both eye and heart, than this accomplished and lovely person exhibited. To judge by what we hear, it was impossible to see her without admiration, or know her without love; and a late bishop used to say, that 'she seemed to him the connecting link between woman and angel.' The devotedness of affection, too, with which she was regarded, not only by her own father and sisters, but by all her husband's family, showed that her fascination was of that best kind, which, like charity, 'begins at home;' and that, while her beauty and music, enchanted the world, she

In the year 1775, Sheridan's opera of *The Duenna* was produced at Covent Garden. The music of this piece consists partly of original compositions by Mr. Linley, and partly of adaptations by him of popular airs. "The run of this opera," says Mr. Moore, "has, I believe, no parallel in the annals of the drama. Sixty-three nights was the career of *The Beggar's Opera*; but *The Duenna* was acted no less than seventy-five times during the season; the only intermissions being a few days at Christmas, and the Fridays in every

had charms more intrinsic and lasting for those who came nearer to her. We have already seen with what pliant sympathy she followed her husband through his various pursuits,—identifying herself with the politician as warmly and readily as with the author, and keeping Love still attendant on Genius, through all his transformations. As the wife of the dramatist and manager, we find her calculating the receipts of the house, assisting in the adaptation of her husband's opera, and reading over the plays sent in by dramatic candidates. As the wife of the senator and orator, we see her, with no less zeal, making extracts from state-papers, and copying out ponderous pamphlets,—entering with all her heart and soul into the details of elections, and even endeavouring to fathom the mysteries of the Funds. The affectionate and sensible care with which she watched over not only her own children, but those which her beloved sister, Mrs. Tickell, confided to her in dying, gives the finish to this picture of domestic usefulness. When it is recollected, too, that the person thus homely employed was gifted with every charm that could adorn and delight society, it would be difficult, perhaps, to find anywhere one more perfect example of that happy mixture of utility and ornament, in which all that is prized by the husband and the lover combines, and which renders woman what the sacred fire was to the Parsees,—not only an object of adoration on their altars, but a source of warmth and comfort to their hearts."

week;—the latter, on account of Leoni, who being a Jew, could not act on those nights.” It is still attractive, and more frequently performed than any opera of so old a date. As a drama, it is superior to any musical piece that we have; and the music is full of beauty, spirit, and freshness.

About this time, Mr. Linley left Bath, and took up his residence in London, in consequence of becoming joint-patentee of Drury-lane theatre, along with his son-in-law, Mr. Sheridan. He conducted for many years the musical department of this theatre, and produced for it a number of pieces; the best and most successful of which were, *The Carnival of Venice*; *Selima and Azor*, an adaptation of Gretry’s *Zemire et Azor*; *The Camp*, written by Sheridan; *The Spanish Maid*; *The Stranger at Home*; and *Love in the East*. None of these pieces are now performed; but some of the songs which they contain are still sung, and listened to with delight by the lovers of English music. Mr. Linley also added those orchestral accompaniments to the airs in *The Beggar’s Opera*, which have been ever since made use of.

In the year 1778, in the untimely death of his eldest son, at the age of two-and-twenty, Mr. Linley received a blow from which he never recovered. Thomas Linley was a young man of great genius and attainments, and had returned to his father from his travels on the Continent, where he had been the fellow-student and friend of Mozart. When on a visit to the duke of Ancaster, at his seat in Lincolnshire, Linley, along with some other young people, were amusing themselves with sailing in a pleasure-boat, which by some accident

upset, and Linley, who was an excellent swimmer, perished through his desire to assist his companions, all of whom were saved. The father's grief for this afflicting bereavement produced a brain-fever, from which he recovered, but never regained his former health and spirits. Twelve ballads were published by him some time after the death of his son; the first of which, "I sing of the days that are gone," evidently refers to that mournful event. They are purely English in style, and very simple in construction, but full of originality and feeling. His *Six Elegies*, published at Bath, at an earlier period, are distinguished by similar qualities.

Mr. Linley had another daughter, Maria, who was preparing to appear in public, and promised to rival her celebrated sister, when she was unfortunately cut off in early youth. She died on the 5th of September 1784; and it has been said, on the authority of Dr. Harrington of Bath, that immediately before she expired, she sang at the harpsichord, Handel's air, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." In the *Memoirs of Mrs. F. Sheridan* there is a most affecting account of the last moments of this highly-gifted young woman, from which it appears that the anecdote as generally related, is not strictly correct. "She died of a fever," says the author of that work, "and was attended by Dr. Harrington, a gentleman no less celebrated for his medical skill than for his musical abilities. A little time previous to her death, when confined to her bed, she raised herself up, and, with unexpected and momentary animation, sang a part of the anthem, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.' The female attendant described the scene as the most affecting she had ever

witnessed. The pathetic and almost super-human sweetness of the notes breathed by the young and lovely creature who was just departing from them, and the awful hope inculcated in the words of the air she had chosen, contributed to give an appearance of inspiration to this last effort of a voice which had delighted every ear. Dr. Harrington was greatly overcome by the scene, and could only exclaim, 'She is an angel!' as he left the room. Exhausted by the effort, she sank into the arms of her attendant, and shortly afterwards breathed her last."

Mr. Linley died in London, in 1795. Soon after his death, a collection was published of his posthumous works, and those of his son. It contains many admirable songs, glees, and madrigals, which are less known than they deserve to be. One of them, however, the madrigal, "Let me, careless and unthoughtful lying," by the elder Linley, is so beautiful, that it is frequently sung at concerts, and the different glee and madrigal societies.

Mr. Linley's younger son, WILLIAM LINLEY, went at an early age to India, where he held several important situations under government. After his return with a competent fortune, he resided in London, much esteemed and respected, till his death, which took place in 1834. He possessed the musical genius of his family, and published several works of merit, particularly the *Dramatic Songs of Shakspeare*. His literary attainments also were considerable.

WILLIAM JACKSON was born in Exeter, in 1730. He was liberally educated, and received his first musical instructions from the organist of the cathedral. He

then went to London, and studied under Travers, the organist of the Chapel Royal; and finally returned to his native city. In 1777, he was appointed organist, and placed at the head of the musical establishment of the cathedral, in which situation he remained till his death in 1803. He was greatly respected, and his memory is still cherished by many of his fellow-citizens.

Jackson published, at different periods, several sets of songs, which were at one time popular throughout the kingdom. Among his *Canzonets for two Voices*, are several beautiful pieces,—particularly, “Time has not thinned my flowing hair,” and, “Love in thine eyes for ever plays;” which will long afford pleasure to those who can enjoy good music, though it may be old. He composed the music of several dramatic pieces; one of which, *The Lord of the Manor*, written by General Burgoyne, was very popular. It contains the still-favourite songs, “Encompass’d in an angel’s frame,” and, “When first this humble roof I knew.”

In his capacity of director of a great ecclesiastical establishment, he composed many pieces of cathedral music, some of which, we believe, were published; but they did not add to his reputation. They are still performed in the cathedral of Exeter, in consequence of his connexion with it; but have not been adopted elsewhere.

Mr. Jackson’s literary acquirements were considerable. His thirty *Letters on various Subjects* contain a good deal of ingenious and sound disquisition on matters of science, literature, and the arts. Of course, music is not overlooked, and the faults of the greatest masters are acutely exposed; though he betrays a

tendency to depreciate the labours of composers in those departments of the art in which he was probably conscious of his own want of proficiency. He was passionately fond of painting, and a clever artist, in the manner of Gainsborough. As a melodist, he possessed a style of his own, remarkable for tenderness, simplicity, and pastoral sweetness.

DR. SAMUEL ARNOLD, though he has been already mentioned as a distinguished ecclesiastical composer, is better known to the public as a writer for the theatre. He was born in 1740. He received the rudiments of his musical education in the Chapel Royal, under Mr. Gates, the master of the children, and Dr. Nares, his successor. So great were Arnold's attainments in music, at an early age, that, before he had reached his twenty-third year, he became composer to Covent Garden theatre; and in 1776, he was engaged by Mr. Colman, to fill the same office at the Haymarket. In these situations, he produced a series of dramatic pieces, several of which are still performed. In 1773, he obtained the degree of doctor of music at Oxford. His oratorio, *The Prodigal Son*, had been performed at the installation of Lord North as chancellor of the university. Previous to conferring a degree, it is the custom for the professor of music to examine the exercise given in by the candidate, as an evidence of his qualifications: but, on this occasion, Dr. Hayes, the musical professor, returned Mr. Arnold's score unopened, saying, that it was quite unnecessary to examine the exercise of the author of *The Prodigal Son*.

In 1783, on the death of Dr. Nares, Dr. Arnold succeeded him as organist of the Chapel Royal, and

composer to His Majesty. In 1789, he was chosen, by the Academy of Ancient Music, the conductor of their concerts. In 1793, on the death of Dr. Cooke, he was requested to accept the place of organist of Westminster Abbey. He declined the office, on account of his many professional engagements, but was permitted to accept it on his own terms, and to perform the duty by a deputy, when he was unable to give his personal attendance. He was afterwards solicited to conduct the annual performances in St. Paul's, for the benefit of the sons of the clergy; a request with which, as it was an affair of charity, and unattended with emolument, he readily complied, and conducted these performances till his death. He died October, 1802, and was interred in Westminster Abbey.

Dr. Arnold enriched the vocal music of England with a great number of beautiful airs, which still retain, and will long preserve, their freshness and popularity. His best pieces keep their place on the stage; and there is reason to hope, will, with other works of the older English school, be again performed more frequently than they are at present. *The Castle of Andalusia*, *The Mountaineers*, *Inkle and Yarico*, and *The Surrender of Calais*, are lively and pleasing dramas; and the admirable songs, "The hardy sailor braves the ocean;" "Flow, thou regal, purple stream;" "Faint and wearily;" "When the hollow drum," with many others, will be listened to with delight, so long as the people of England retain a taste for the pure and genuine melody of their own country.

CHARLES DIBDIN was born at Southampton in 1745. When a boy, he was a singer in the cathedral of Win-

chester, and was afterwards a candidate for the situation of organist in a village-church in Hampshire, but was rejected on account of his youth. He then resolved to try his fortune in London, where he was employed for some time in composing ballads for music-sellers, and in tuning piano-fortes. He next went upon the stage, and had considerable success as an actor and singer, even on the London boards: but the bent of his genius was towards composition; and, having produced the operas of *Lionel and Clarissa*, (the music of which is partly his own, and partly selected,) and *The Padlock*, he established his reputation as a dramatic composer. These pieces appeared in 1768. He wrote for the stage with great industry, for more than twenty years; during which time, according to an account given by himself, he produced near a hundred operas, and other musical pieces, for the different theatres. He adds, that for all these pieces, during so long a period, the whole amount of his emoluments, including his salaries for conducting the music of different theatres, and his annual benefits, was only 5,500*l*. This very inadequate remuneration he ascribes to the unfair dealing of the managers, with all of whom, and especially Garrick, he appears to have been engaged in constant quarrels. Finding himself so ill rewarded for his theatrical labours, he set on foot a series of entertainments, consisting of recitations and songs,—written, composed, delivered, and sung, by himself. For these entertainments, he opened a small theatre in Leicester-square, and gave them, not only there, but in all the principal towns of the kingdom, for several years, with great success. They were exceedingly agreeable, containing

a great deal of wit, anecdote, and satire, and full of songs, admirable both in their words and melodies. These songs enjoyed extraordinary popularity, and were sold in immense quantities in every part of the country; so that this species of entertainment must have been very profitable to him. He seems, however, not to have been prudent in pecuniary matters; for he died in 1814, in distressed circumstances, after having been for some years afflicted with a malady which rendered him almost helpless.

Dibdin had received hardly any musical education; and his attainments in the art were so small, that he had not skill enough to put a good accompaniment to his own airs. But he possessed a gift which no education or study can bestow,—an inexhaustible vein of melody. Among the hundreds of airs which he composed, it is wonderful to observe how few are bad, or even indifferent; and how free they are from sameness, or the repetition of similar passages. And yet, with all this variety, there is no straining after novelty. The airs flow so naturally, that they appear to have cost him no sort of effort, but to have sprung up, as it were, in his mind, without even being sought for. In their expression, too, they are not less various than in their phrases. Whether the poetry is tender, lively, or energetic, the music never fails to speak a corresponding language. There are few things, in the class to which they belong, more delightful than “When the lads in the village,” and “I’d lock’d up all my treasure,” in *The Quaker*; or than “And did you not hear of a jolly young waterman;” “Then farewell, my trim-

built wherry," in *The Waterman*; or "Say, little foolish, fluttering thing," in *The Padlock*.

But Dibdin's sea songs will be the most enduring monument to his memory. Whatever may have been done by the bards of antiquity, there is no instance in modern times of so powerful, extensive, and salutary an influence being exercised by poetry and music. They strike at once upon the heart of the British sailor,—address themselves to his habits, his manners, his propensities, his peculiarities of thought and feeling; raise his courage from a mere animal instinct to a noble moral principle; inspire him with generosity, truth, and constancy; and strengthen in his mind the influence of those tender ties which are the great springs of human virtue as well as happiness. As a mark of public gratitude for these inestimable lyrics, the government, in 1803, bestowed on their author a pension of two hundred pounds a year; but the administration which came into office in 1806 deprived him of this very moderate tribute, as a measure of economy! In 1810, some individuals, at the head of whom were Benjamin Oakley, Esq., of Tavistock-square, and Mr. Perry, the distinguished proprietor of *The Morning Chronicle*, set on foot a public dinner, in order to raise money to purchase an annuity for Mr. Dibdin. The sum obtained was '640*l.*, with which an annuity was bought for him and his daughter conjointly.

An edition of Dibdin's sea songs was published by the late Dr. Kitchener, in 1824. This collection contains a hundred and one songs, and is sufficiently ample; but the editor was incompetent to the execution of his

task. The music is full of inaccuracies; and Dibdin's accompaniments, meagre and imperfect as they are, are rendered still more so by frequent mutilations. An edition of these songs, by a sound and judicious musician, is still much wanted, and would assuredly be well received by the public.

WILLIAM SHIELD was born in the county of Durham, about the year 1749. His father, who was a singing-master, taught him the rudiments of music. When he was nine years of age, his father died, leaving his family very slenderly provided for. He was apprenticed to a boat-builder in North Shields, who proved an indulgent master, and allowed him to occupy his leisure hours in cultivating his talent for music. His proficiency as a violin-player attracted the notice of the celebrated Avison, the author of the *Essay on Musical Expression*, who kindly gave him some instructions in harmony. He was employed as leader of the concerts at Scarborough, where he became acquainted with several eminent performers from London, by means of whom he obtained a situation in the orchestra of the Italian Opera-house, where, for eighteen years, he played the principal tenor.

His first dramatic work was the music of *The Flitch of Bacon*, an afterpiece, which appeared in 1778; and was very successful. Soon afterwards he became composer to Covent Garden theatre, for which he produced several of his most popular works. In 1791, he visited his native town, where his aged mother, to whom he always showed the most filial attention, was still living. He collected, at this time, a number of the old traditional melodies of the border counties, some pretty

specimens of which he has inserted in his *Rudiments of Thorough Bass*. In the same year he made a journey to the Continent; in the course of which he visited the principal cities of Italy, with the view of acquiring a knowledge of the music of that country. After his return, he resumed his musical employments, and composed a number of dramatic pieces, and many detached songs, duets, glees, &c. He also published his *Introduction to Harmony*, a work of much value at that time, but now superseded by more methodical and comprehensive treatises.

In 1817, he succeeded Sir William Parsons as master of the band of musicians in ordinary to the king. This appointment was bestowed upon him by George the Fourth (then prince regent,) without any application on his part, as a mark of personal regard, and of esteem for his character as a distinguished artist. During the latter years of his life he suffered much from the infirmities of age, and died of water in the chest in January, 1829.

Shield was a man of an amiable, kind, and placid disposition; and the character of his mind is impressed on his music. The subjects of his pieces are chiefly taken from rural life, and he is most successful in speaking the language of innocent gaiety and simple tenderness. He probably never felt, and therefore has not attempted to express, the more violent and darker passions. *Rosina* is the most charming Arcadian picture that can be imagined; and *The Woodman*, *The Farmer*, *The Flitch of Bacon*, and *The Poor Soldier*, are all full of the freshness of the country. Shield's pastoral style possesses much elegance and refinement.

He even introduces airs requiring great extent of voice and power of execution ; such as the song, " Whilst with village maids I stray," in *Rosina*; yet there are so much grace and simplicity of design in these airs, that, when sung (as they ought to be) without effort, they are never felt to be misplaced or out of character. Shield's accompaniments in his dramatic pieces, though simple, are ingenious, and show taste and delicacy in the use of the different instruments. Were his orchestral colouring richer, it would be beautiful. Shield composed many detached songs, and a few glees, some of which are still popular. His "Shakspeare's Load-stars" is a great favourite among glee-singers*. He

* This glee affords an amusing instance of the want of attention with which composers sometimes read their poetry. The words are from *The Midsummer Night's Dream* :—

O happy fair,
Your eyes are load-stars, and your tongue's sweet air,
More tunable than lark to shepherd's ear,
When wheat is green, and hawthorn buds appear.

Shield writes the first part of this glee upon the first two lines, with a full close. This is sung twice over; then comes the second part of the glee to the two following lines, with a semi-close; after which the subject is resumed, and the whole terminates with the words of the first part, which are written as before,—

O happy fair,
Your eyes are load-stars, and your tongue sweet air !

To make three people, indeed, sing this pretty complaint of a jealous damsel, and "toss the words about from side to side," is bad enough, though this abuse is sanctioned (if it *can* be sanctioned) by usage. But we do not remember any parallel to such a reading as the above.

composed, too, some instrumental music; particularly a set of *Trios for two violins and a bass*, which have no small merit, considering the state of instrumental music in England when they were written.

STEPHEN STORACE was the son of a Neapolitan, a good performer on the double-bass in the band of the Opera-house, and was born in London in 1763. He manifested his musical capacity at a very early age, and was placed by his father in the Conservatorio, or Music School, of St. Onophrio, at Naples. He made rapid progress in his studies; and, while yet a pupil, composed several things which he afterwards made use of in his operas, particularly the finale to the first act of *The Pirates*, one of the most beautiful of his compositions. After finishing his studies, he visited Germany, and composed an opera called *Gli Equivoci*, taken from Shakspeare's *Comedy of Errors*. Parts of this piece were afterwards used by the author in his English operas.

In his travels, Storace was accompanied by his sister, Anna Storace, who had been a pupil of Sacchini, and afterwards became one of the first singers of the day. They returned to England in 1787; and Signora Storace immediately obtained an engagement at the King's Theatre, where she appeared in Paesiello's *Gli Schiavi per Amore*, brought out under the direction of her brother. Storace's success in the King's Theatre was impeded by the intrigues of his rivals; and he retired in disgust to Bath, where, for a time, he turned his attention to drawing. In this pursuit, however, he did not persevere; but soon returned to London, where he obtained an engagement as composer to Drury-lane

theatre ; his first production for which was an adaptation of the German opera of *The Doctor and Apothecary*.

In 1789, he brought out, at Drury-lane, his first English opera, *The Haunted Tower*. This beautiful piece had the most brilliant success : it was performed fifty times the first season, and has remained in constant favour ever since. In 1790 the entertainment of *No Song no Supper* was produced at the same theatre. "It will hardly be credited," says Kelly in his *Reminiscences*, "that this charming and popular opera, which has been acted hundreds of nights, was rejected by the Drury-lane management."

In 1791 he produced *The Siege of Belgrade*, which is an adaptation to the English stage of Martini's opera, *La Cosa rara* ; consisting chiefly of the original music, with some additional compositions by Storace. In 1792 appeared *The Pirates*, one of the finest and most successful of his works. For several years he continued to produce a number of popular pieces, among which was *Lodoiska*, a piece translated from the French by John Kemble, and the music of which is a selection from the two operas of Kreutzer and Cherubini, with some beautiful additions by Storace, among which is the celebrated air, "Ye streams that round my prison creep."

His last work was the music of Colman's drama, *The Iron Chest*. His health was always delicate, and his exertions in bringing out this piece appear to have cost him his life. "On the first rehearsal," says Kelly, "though labouring under a severe attack of gout and fever, after having been confined to his bed for many days, he insisted on being wrapped up in blankets, and

carried in a sedan-chair to the cold stage of the play-house. The entreaties and prayers of his family were of no avail,—go he would: he went, and remained till the end of the rehearsal. He returned to his bed, whence he never rose again.” He died on the 19th of March, 1795, in the thirty-third year of his age.

A little while before his death, Storace had gone to Bath, for the purpose of hearing Braham, and had engaged him for Drury-lane, where he was to appear in the opera of *Mahmoud*, in the preparation of which Storace was then employed. It was left in an incomplete state at his death; but, by the exertions of his friends, and with some additional music selected by his sister, it was performed, on the 30th of the same month in which he died, for the benefit of his widow and child. Supported by Kemble’s acting, and Braham’s singing, it had great success, and was performed for many nights.

Storace possessed a strong and capacious mind. Mr. Sheridan once remarked, that, had he been bred to the law, he must have become lord-chancellor. He was well versed in literature, and his critical opinions were much respected. Mr. Kelly says, that when a boy, his passion for calculation was beyond all belief; in which respect, as in others, he had a resemblance to Mozart.

His operas, to this day, are among the most attractive that we possess. He had been educated in the *reformed* Italian school of the close of the last century; and the models on which he formed his style were the works of Piccini, Sacchini, and Paesiello. From the study of these, he not only acquired grace and refinement, but learned to enrich his operas with those concerted scenes

and finales, the introduction of which was a new era in dramatic composition. In the beauty and spirit of his concerted pieces, he has not been surpassed by any English composer who has succeeded him. In writing for the orchestra, he has followed his Italian models in the simplicity of his score; but his accompaniments are full of taste and elegance, and want nothing but a slight infusion of German richness and variety, to be everything that could be desired. Were Storace's best operas retouched, with this view, by a skilful and discreet musician, and brought out in a good and careful style, they would appear as modern as if they were of yesterday, and give all the pleasure they produced forty years ago.

CHAPTER XVII.

MUSIC IN GERMANY IN THE PRESENT CENTURY. — WINTER. — HIMMEL. — WEIGL. — ANDREAS AND BERNARD ROMBERG. — FESCA. — BEETHOVEN.

AMONG the great composers of Germany who flourished at the beginning of the present century, the oldest appears to be PETER WINTER, who was born at Mannheim in 1755. In 1775 he was appointed director of the orchestra of the theatre at Mannheim, and afterwards held the same situation at Munich, where he resided during his life. His compositions for the church, the theatre, and the chamber, are very numerous. Of his ecclesiastical works, his *Requiem* is the most celebrated. Many of his German operas were received with the greatest favour, and several of them are still performed in Germany. The operas which he composed for the King's Theatre, during his residence in London, in 1803 and 1804, were among the most successful of his works. These were *Zaira*, *Proserpina*, and *Calypso*. In these, the airs, which he composed to suit the limited but fine *contralto* voice of Madame Grassini, are beautifully simple, and were long seen on the piano-forte of every lady who had any pretensions as a singer of Italian music. One of his German operas, *The Interrupted Sacrifice*, was brought out in an English dress a few years ago, at the English Opera-house, and obtained considerable success. His last composition for the stage was a comic piece entitled

Der Sanger und der Schneider (The Singer and the Tailor), founded on a well-known anecdote of Fari-nelli: it is a great favourite in the German theatres. He died at Munich, in October, 1825, at the age of seventy.

FREDERICK HIMMEL was born in Brandenburg, in 1765. At an early age he obtained the situation of *maestro di capella*, at Berlin, which he retained during his life. He died in 1814. His works are very numerous, and in various styles. His most celebrated opera is *Fanchon*, which is still performed in all parts of Germany. His music for the piano-forte is of a very high class; in particular, his two sets of trios for the piano-forte, violin, and violoncello, are among the finest compositions of this kind, and ought to stand in the library of every amateur, beside the similar works of Mozart, Beethoven, and Hummel. He produced an immense number of detached songs and ballads, many of which are very original and beautiful.

JOSEPH WEIGL, born at Vienna in 1765, was director of the orchestra of the imperial theatre in that city. In his dramatic music, he is remarkable for the pastoral freshness and simplicity of his style; for which his opera of the *Swiss Family* is particularly distinguished. Few operas have enjoyed greater popularity in Germany than this, which was produced at Vienna in 1809. It is certainly very pleasing, and contains much elegant melody; but it wants vigour and depth, and soon palls upon repetition. An early work of this composer, *L'Amor Marinaro*, was brought out at the English Opera-house, in 1828, under the title of *The Pirate of Genoa*, with little success.

ANDREAS and BERNARD ROMBERG were the children of two brothers, both of whom were eminent musicians. Anthony Romberg, the father of Andreas, was an excellent performer on the bassoon, resident at Bonn; and Henry, the father of Bernard, was music-director to the bishop of Munster. They brought up their children to their own profession; and, in 1799, gave a concert at Hamburgh, in which the whole performers were members of their families. Andreas and Bernard soon distinguished themselves as performers,—the one on the violin, and the other on the violoncello; and both by their genius for composition. About the year 1790 they held situations in the chapel of the elector of Cologne, at Bonn, and afterwards obtained engagements in the orchestra of the German theatre at Hamburgh. After travelling over various parts of Europe, and acquiring high reputation as performers on their respective instruments, they returned to Hamburgh, where Andreas settled; and Bernard afterwards obtained a situation in the royal chapel at Berlin. Andreas died twelve or thirteen years ago. Bernard, we believe, still resides at Berlin.

Andreas Romberg is the author of many pieces for the church, several operas which were favourably received in Germany, and some cantatas, the most remarkable of which is Schiller's *Song of the Bell*. Bernard is also the author of several theatrical and other vocal works. But both of them are chiefly distinguished as instrumental composers. The symphonies of Andreas, in particular, are masterly productions, and well known and frequently performed in this country; and Bernard has furnished the lovers of the violoncello

with a great variety of the most beautiful music that has ever been written for that instrument. He has long enjoyed the reputation of being (except, perhaps, our own Lindley,) the greatest violoncellist in Europe.

FREIDRICH ERNST FESCA, *maestro di capella* to the duke of Baden, was a voluminous and distinguished composer both of vocal and instrumental music. He is known in this country chiefly by his violin quartets, many of which are admirable. He died in 1826.

The illustrious name of LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN began to be heard in Germany a short time before the beginning of the present century. He was born in 1770, at Bonn, where his father was a tenor singer in the elector's chapel. He made great progress in music at a very early age, notwithstanding his being attacked by a disease which affected his hearing, and at last terminated in total deafness.

Some of his vocal and instrumental pieces were published at Manheim when he was only thirteen years of age. In 1792, the elector of Cologne, whose attention had been attracted to his youthful genius, sent him to Vienna to study composition, which he did, first, for a short time, under Haydn, and afterwards under the celebrated teacher, Albrechtsberger.

His first publications were treated with great severity by the German journalists, by whom he was accused of harsh modulations, melodies more singular than pleasing, and a constant straining after originality. It is always the fate of genius, such as Beethoven's, to be censured before it is understood. Those productions, so roughly treated by the Aristarchs of the time, probably contained crudities to which youthful inexperience is

liable; but they must have been much akin, in style and character, to those compositions which follow them very closely in point of date, and which form the commencement of the regular series of his published works. Now the very earliest of these,—his three trios for the piano-forte, violin, and violoncello; his sonatas, dedicated to Haydn, and his first trio for a violin, tenor, and violoncello,—are at present looked upon as correct, clear, and smooth compositions; yet, within our remembrance, these pieces were considered, in England, as wild, crabbed, and unintelligible. When his symphony in C minor was first tried by the band of the Philharmonic Society, an assemblage of musical ability not surpassed in the world, they were so astounded at its odd and abrupt outset, and so bewildered by the novelty of its harmonies and transitions, that it was not till after several repetitions, that its amazing grandeur and beauty began to unfold themselves even to *their* enlightened vision. When Mozart's quartets, those models of pure and delicate harmony, were originally published, a number of copies, sent to Italy, were returned on the hands of the publishers, as being full of errors of the engraver. The severity, therefore, with which Beethoven's early compositions were treated by the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, and other German journals, is by no means surprising.

By the death of the elector of Cologne, in 1801, Beethoven lost a zealous patron; and this event seems to have induced him to leave his native place and take up his abode at Vienna, in which city he constantly resided for the rest of his life. Being of an independent spirit, and utterly incapable of practising the arts of a

courtier, he never succeeded in gaining the favour of the great, or in obtaining any of the solid advantages with which that favour is attended. He was appointed to no situation of emolument; and, for the greater part of his life, had nothing but the income derived from his compositions. He strongly felt a treatment which was unworthy of his genius, and frequently gave vent to his feelings with more freedom than prudence. At length, in 1809, he received an offer of the situation of *maestro di capella* to the newly-formed court of Jerome Buonaparte, king of Westphalia, and was about to accept of it, when the archduke Rudolph, and the princes Lobkowitz and Kinsky, ashamed of the neglect which he had met with, and actuated by a liberality which did them honour, settled on him an annuity of four thousand florins (four hundred pounds sterling), by a deed drawn up in flattering and delicate terms. The only condition was, that he should reside in Vienna, or some other part of Austria Proper, and not travel into foreign countries without the consent of his patrons. He was thus placed in easy circumstances; but, unfortunately, owing to the death of prince Kinsky, and the ruin of prince Lobkowitz, the greatest part of his pension was discontinued; and all that he was receiving at the time of his death, was seven hundred and twenty florins, or seventy-two pounds a-year.

In the meantime, while a rapid succession of great works was filling Europe with his fame, Beethoven was withdrawing himself more and more from intercourse with the world, and living in a state of seclusion, enjoying only the society of a few individuals, whose admiration of his genius, and personal regard, led them to

accommodate themselves to the peculiarities of his disposition. The aristocracy of Vienna appear at length to have become aware of his claims to their respect. In 1824, a meeting of some patrons and amateurs of the art took place, at which it was resolved to present an address to him, requesting him to re-appear among them, and permit some of his works to be performed in his presence; and also to agree to an application which had been made to him by the direction of the Royal Theatre, respecting the opera of *Melusina*, on which he was understood to be employed.

An address to this effect, with a number of noble and distinguished names attached to it, was presented to him; and he agreed to be present at the proposed concert. A great musical performance took place on the 7th of May, in the principal theatre of Vienna. The theatre was crowded to excess; and the appearance of the illustrious recluse was hailed with the utmost enthusiasm. He took his place at the side of the principal leader, and, with his original scores before him, indicated the times of the various movements. The music consisted of his well-known symphony in C major; three hymns from the grand mass which he had lately composed; and his symphony concluding with a vocal chorus from Schiller's *Ode to Joy*, which had been written by him for our Philharmonic Society, and was now performed for the first time. These pieces were rapturously applauded; and, at the conclusion of the concert, Beethoven was loudly called forward. He made a modest obeisance, and retired amidst the acclamations of the audience. The strong interest excited by this concert, induced the director

of the theatre to make an offer to the composer of a certain consideration, if he would assist at another performance of the same music, which accordingly took place soon afterwards. These were his last appearances in public.

In December, 1826, in consequence of travelling from the country to Vienna, in very inclement weather, Beethoven caught a cold, which was followed by an inflammation of the lungs. This attack produced such a degree of debility, that symptoms of dropsy appeared; and he laboured under this disease till the 26th of March, 1827, when he expired after dreadful sufferings.

While on his death-bed, a circumstance occurred strongly indicative of the veneration with which he regarded Handel. Mr. Stumpff, of Great Portland-street, a gentleman distinguished as an ardent and enlightened admirer of musical genius, who enjoyed Beethoven's friendship, and had heard him express his devotion for Handel, and a desire to possess his works, sent him a complete set of Arnold's edition of the works of that composer, in forty volumes, taking care that they should be delivered at Beethoven's house free of expense. This valuable present arrived only a few days before his death; and the books were brought to him and laid on his bed. His joy at its reception was such as to make him forget his melancholy condition. A gleam of animation lighted up his countenance: he gazed on the volumes as they lay before him, and, pointing to them with his hand, exclaimed, with great feeling and emphasis, "Das ist das Wahre!"—"That is the thing!"

Some time before his death, he had reminded the Philharmonic Society of London of a promise they had made him, of giving a concert for his benefit. The Society instantly sent him, through Mr. Moscheles, a present of a hundred pounds; an act of generosity which he acknowledged, in a letter to that gentleman, in terms of the utmost gratitude. He requested, at the same time, that the society would deduct that amount from the profits of the concert they intended to give; and expressed his hope of being able to evince his sense of their kindness by composing a new work for their use. His sufferings from his disease appear to have been aggravated by the dread of impending destitution, which made him deny himself the ordinary comforts of life. The arrival of the Philharmonic Society's remittance, which he received only ten days before his death, greatly revived his spirits. He said cheerfully to his friends about him, "Now we may again occasionally treat ourselves to a merry day;"—and desired to have his favourite dish of fish (the only article of food that he was fond of,) even were it only that he might taste of it. Such being, apparently, his own impression, and such being that of his friends with regard to his poverty, much surprise was excited by the discovery that he had died possessed of money (including the present from the Philharmonic Society,) to the amount of about twelve hundred pounds sterling.

Considerable indignation was expressed in Vienna, that Beethoven, in such circumstances, should have applied to a foreign country for assistance, of which, it appeared, he did not stand in need; and it was said,

that had he required such aid, the slightest hint of his necessities would at once have procured it from his numerous friends and admirers at home. It is not wonderful, however, that he should have felt less repugnance to ask assistance from a country in which his genius had been long and justly appreciated, and through the medium of a musical body who had, probably more than any other in Europe, contributed to exalt his reputation by their splendid performance of his works, than from the public of Vienna, whose attention and patronage, withheld from him, had been lavished upon artists immeasurably his inferiors in everything but skill in the art of courting popular favour. At the time of his death, beside the sum above mentioned, which he had saved, he enjoyed the remnant of the pension settled on him by the Archduke Rudolph, Prince Lobkowitz, and Count Kinsky. He had thus wherewithal to live, according to his abstemious and retired habits; and when we consider his high and independent spirit, we can only ascribe the dread of want which appears to have imbibited his latter days, and his application to the Philharmonic Society, to the influence of disease in breaking down his once powerful mind*.

* Some interesting correspondence relating to Beethoven's death was published in the musical journals of the time. Beethoven's letter to Moscheles, on receiving the Philharmonic Society's present, is as follows. It is dated 18th March.

"My dear, good Moscheles,—With what feelings I read your letter of the 1st March I cannot find words to express. The generosity with which the Philharmonic Society have almost exceeded my request has moved me to the innermost of my soul. I request you, therefore, my dear Moscheles, to be the organ by

Beethoven's personal character and manners have been represented in very different lights in the various accounts which have been given of him. In Russell's

which I convey to the Philharmonic Society my heartfelt thanks for their kind sympathy and distinguished liberality. With regard to the concert which the Society intend to arrange for my benefit, I trust they will not relinquish that noble design, and beg that they will deduct the 100%, which they have already sent me, from the profits. Should after that any surplus be left, and the Society be kindly willing to bestow it upon me, I hope to have it in my power to evince my gratitude by composing for them either a new symphony, which already lies sketched on my desk, or a new overture, or anything else that the Society may prefer. Should heaven only be pleased to restore me soon again to health, I will prove to the generous English how much I value their sympathy in my melancholy fate. Your noble conduct, my dear friend, will ever remain in my remembrance. I hope shortly to return my thanks to Sir George Smart and Mr. Stumpff. Farewell!"

This letter was accompanied by one from Dr. Schindler, an eminent musician of Vienna, who paid Beethoven the most unwearied attention during his malady. Dr. Schindler gives a most melancholy account of the state into which Beethoven fell almost immediately after writing the above letter, of his still frequent recurrence to the conduct of the Philharmonic Society, and of his desire, when he occasionally woke from his lethargy, to write to Sir George Smart, who had been greatly instrumental in obtaining the 100% for him, and also to his friend Mr. Stumpff. Dr. Schindler laments the extreme caprice and irritability which increased upon him along with his disease.

In another letter to Mr. Moscheles, Dr. Schindler, after giving an account of Beethoven's death and funeral, says—"In taking an inventory of what he had left, in furniture and other personal property, there were found, to our great astonishment, among some old papers, in an old decayed chest, seven Austrian bank-bills, of the value of about 1000%. in English money, and some hundred florins in paper-money. The 100% which the Philharmonic Society of London had sent him were also found untouched.

Tour in Germany, published in 1824, an able and interesting work, which has met with much attention

Now it is here the universal cry, and it has even been said in the public papers, that Beethoven had not stood in need of foreign assistance. But it is not considered that Beethoven being only fifty-six years of age, and of a strong constitution, might well hope to attain an advanced age. His illness, moreover, had made him timid and nervous, and his physicians had told him that he must not work for some years to come. It was, therefore, natural for him to fear that he might be under the necessity of selling one bank-bill after another; and how long could he subsist upon these seven bank-bills without getting into distress? In short, my dear friend, both myself and Counsellor Von Breuning request you very earnestly, if this scandalous talk should have spread to England, to publish, out of regard to the memory of Beethoven, through the medium of some journal, the letters which you have from him and myself on this subject, in order to give the opinion of the English public a better direction." Dr. Schindler adds a circumstance which must be considered as showing the activity of the phrenologists. "Finally, I have to communicate to you a very extraordinary occurrence. Yesterday the sexton of Währing [the parish where Beethoven was buried] came to inform us that he had been offered a thousand florins, in a note which he produced, if he would deposit Beethoven's head in a certain place. The police is on the alert, and actively engaged in the investigation of this singular affair."

There is another letter from Herr Streicher of Vienna, an intimate friend of Beethoven's, to Mr. Stumpff, written a few days after Beethoven's death, containing some remarks on Beethoven's application to England for assistance, and the impression produced at Vienna by that step. "How generally," says M. Streicher, "and how deeply this irreparable loss is felt here I need not say; yet I cannot pass unnoticed the fact, that the whole public of Vienna, though long accustomed to Beethoven's eccentricities, are not only surprised but painfully wounded at the circumstance of his applying to England for support. Was it excess of apprehension, produced by disease, that in the

from the public, we find the following description, which, at all events, is lively and graphic.

end he should perhaps suffer from want? or had he been ill-advised by a hasty friend? What else could have moved him to take a step which places in the most unfavourable light not only those in the midst of whom he lived for thirty-four years, but also his friends, his second native place, nay even the whole of Germany? Beethoven himself, it would appear, subsequently felt all this, for when I handed to him your enclosure, he carefully avoided to touch upon the subject of having requested assistance from the Philharmonic Society through you; and said, 'They must think in London, that being by illness prevented from composing I am in pecuniary embarrassments; I shall, however, accept (these are his own words) the thousand florins, and they may afterwards deduct that sum from the produce of the concert that is arranging for me in London. If they will send me the remainder, I shall write something for it as soon as I am again able to work.'

"Had Beethoven given the slightest hint of his distress to any one of his numerous friends and admirers; or had he addressed himself to his patron, his Imperial Highness the Archduke Rudolph; or had he *here in Vienna* expressed the smallest wish that a concert should be given for his benefit, not only hundreds but thousands would have been ready to assist in the accomplishment of his wish, and would have supported him to the best of their power. Who could suppose that Beethoven, while his delicacy would not let him accept the medical assistance of the celebrated Dr. Staudenheimer, because the latter declined every kind of remuneration, and while he refused every attention offered to him by my father, so as to be hardly induced to accept of even a few bottles of old wine;—that Beethoven, I say, would have indulged his eccentricity so far as to seek in London for that pecuniary assistance which he did not in the least stand in need of? How hasty and unnecessary this application was, is shown by what Beethoven left in personal property, which consisted (as the public knew before) in bank-bills to the amount of 10,000 florins, or 1000*l.* English. If we reckon, in addition to this, three pensions from the Archduke Rudolph,

“Though not an old man, Beethoven is lost to society, in consequence of his extreme deafness. The

Prince Lobkowitz, and Count Kinsky, amounting in the whole to about 720 florins, or 72*l.* English, you will easily judge that Beethoven, with this sum, particularly in Vienna, might have lived several years without standing in need of assistance.”

All this is no justification of the Austrian public. Beethoven had been neglected all his life; and it was known to “his numerous friends and admirers” that he was living in actual penury, and denying himself the common comforts of life. Was not this sufficient to induce the public, and his friends and patrons, to come forward in his behalf, and testify their admiration of his genius and character by munificent assistance, without putting him to the necessity of “giving hints of his distress,” or, in other words, begging for charity? It was not till after some money was found in his repositories that the Viennese were so much surprised and hurt at his having applied to the musicians of London. And, after all, what was this mighty sum—this fortune, accumulated by a man who stood at the very summit of his art, through the exertions of a whole lifetime? A thousand pounds sterling; and this not the surplus of a large income, spent in a handsome establishment and good living, but the hard-earned savings of a life of incessant and poorly-rewarded labour. This thousand pounds, moreover, was a *capital*, the annual revenue arising from which (and which could not exceed forty or fifty pounds), Beethoven was in common prudence entitled only to spend; and, adding to this the magnificent aggregate of his pensions from *three* Austrian princes, his *whole* income could not have been more than about 120*l.* sterling; and this, too, at a time when he had no prospect of being able to add to it by his accustomed exertions.

When M. Streicher says that the public knew, before Beethoven’s death, that he possessed bank-bills to the amount of a thousand pounds, he makes an assertion which is evidently incorrect.

We believe, indeed, that nothing but the enfeebling influence of protracted disease could have reduced the proud spirit of Beethoven, even in these circumstances, and while he had

neglect of his person which he exhibits, gives him a somewhat wild appearance. His features are strong and prominent; his face is full of rude energy; his hair, which neither comb nor scissors seem to have visited for years, over-shadows his broad brow in a quantity and confusion to which only the snakes round a Gorgon's head offer a parallel. His general behaviour does not ill accord with the unpromising exterior. Except when he is among his chosen friends, kindness or affability are not his characteristics. The total loss of hearing has deprived him of all the pleasure which society can give, and perhaps soured his temper. He used to frequent a particular cellar, where he spent the evening in a corner, beyond the reach of all the chattering and disputation of a public room, drinking wine and beer, eating cheese and red herrings, and studying the newspapers. One evening, a person took a seat near him, whose countenance did not please him. He looked hard at the stranger, and spat on the floor, as if he had seen a toad; then glanced at the newspaper,—then again at the intruder, and spat again; his hair bristling gradually into more shaggy ferocity, till he closed the alternation of spitting and staring, by fairly exclaiming, ‘What a scoundrelly phiz!’ and rushing out of the room. Even among his oldest friends, he must be humoured like a wayward child. He has always a small paper-book with him, and what conversation takes place is carried on in writing. In this

wherewithal to supply the wants of the passing day, to apply for assistance from *any* quarter: but assuredly the people of Vienna had no reason to be surprised or hurt that he should have applied anywhere rather than to *them*.

too, although it is not lined, he instantly jots down any musical idea which strikes him. These notes would be utterly unintelligible even to another musician, for they have thus no comparative value; he alone has in his own mind the thread by which he brings out of this labyrinth of dots and circles the richest and most astounding harmonies. The moment he is seated at the piano, he is evidently unconscious that there is anything in existence but himself and his instrument; and, considering how very deaf he is, it seems impossible that he should hear all he plays. Accordingly, when playing very *piano*, he often does not bring out a single note. He hears it himself in the "mind's ear." While his eye, and the almost imperceptible motion of his fingers, show that he is following out the strain through all its dying gradations, the instrument is actually as dumb as the musician is deaf.

"I have heard him play; but to bring him so far required some management; so great is his horror at being anything like exhibited. Had he been plainly asked to do the company that favour, he would have flatly refused; he had to be cheated into it. Every person left the room, except Beethoven and the master of the house, one of his most intimate acquaintances. These two carried on a conversation in the paper-book about bank stock. The gentleman, as if by chance, struck the keys of the piano beside which they were sitting, gradually began to run over one of Beethoven's own compositions, made a thousand errors, and speedily blundered a passage so thoroughly, that the composer condescended to stretch out his hand and put him right. It was enough; the hand was on the piano: his com-

panion immediately left him on some pretext, and joined the rest of the company, who, in the next room, were patiently waiting the issue of this tiresome conjuration. Beethoven, left alone, seated himself at the piano. At first he only struck now and then a few hurried and interrupted notes, as if afraid of being detected in a crime; but gradually he forgot everything else, and ran on during half-an-hour in a fantasy, in a style extremely varied, and marked by the most abrupt transitions. The amateurs were enraptured; to the uninitiated it was more interesting to observe how the music of the man's soul passed over his countenance. He seems to feel the bold, the commanding, and the impetuous, more than what is soothing or gentle. The muscles of the face swell, and its veins start out; the wild eye rolls doubly wild; the mouth quivers;—and Beethoven looks like a wizard overpowered by the demons whom he himself had called up."

Of the fidelity of this description, in so far as it is derived from Mr. Russell's own observation, the character of the writer leaves no room for doubt. But, in speaking from hearsay, he was probably repeating the idle gossip of Vienna, respecting a great man who was talked of by everybody, but was personally known to very few. Beethoven was extremely reserved in the company of strangers; abrupt and blunt in his address; and accustomed to express his feelings and opinions with a freedom not very consistent with the established usages of society. His manners and habits were those of a recluse, excluded by a heavy calamity from cheerful and social intercourse with the world, and wounded by unmerited neglect. A key to many of his peculiarities

is to be found in an interesting document which was discovered among his papers after his death,—a will, made by him during a dangerous illness in the year 1802, and addressed to his brother Carl, and his nephew Ludwig Beethoven. His brother died some years before him ; and his nephew, whom he supported and treated with parental tenderness, was unworthy of his love, and caused him nothing but care and grief. An extract from this affecting paper will enable the reader to form an estimate of Beethoven's real character, and to imagine what he would have been in happier circumstances.*

“My mind was formed from my very cradle for the gentler feelings of our nature, while it seemed destined to accomplish something great. To this I always found myself irresistibly impelled. But in my sixth year I was unhappily attacked by a disease, which was rendered still more afflicting by the blunders of the medical men in whose hands I was placed. After dragging on year after year in the hope of recovery, I was at last doomed to the unhappy prospect of an irremediable evil ; no cure, at least, even if it were possible, was to be expected till after a long series of years. Though born with an ardent and lively disposition, and a mind susceptible of the pleasures of society, I was obliged to withdraw early from a participation in them, and lead a solitary life. Sometimes, indeed, I made an effort to overcome every obstacle thrown in the way of social enjoyment by the defect in my organ of hearing ; but, oh, how painful was

* This document is printed in the *Harmonicon*, for January, 1828, translated from the original, in the possession of M. Schlesinger, the eminent music-seller in Paris.

it to find myself incapacitated, repelled, by my weakness, which at these moments was doubly felt. How was it possible for me to be continually saying, 'Speak louder—raise your voice—I am deaf!' Alas, how could I submit to the continual necessity of exposing the failure of one of my faculties, which, but for mismanagement, I might have shared in common with the rest of my fellow-creatures; a faculty, too, which I once possessed in a greater degree than most persons of my own profession. When I would willingly have mixed among you, my misfortune was felt with double keenness, from the conviction it brought with it, that I must forego the delights of social intercourse, the sweets of conversation, the mutual overflowings of the heart. From all this I was debarred, except as far as absolute necessity demanded. When I ventured to appear in society, I seemed to myself a kind of excommunicated being. If circumstances compelled me to appear in the presence of strangers, an indescribable agitation seized me,—I was tortured by the fear of being rendered conspicuous only by my infirmity.

"In this state I remained a full half year, when a blundering doctor persuaded me that the best thing I could do to recover my hearing, was to go into the country. Here, incited by my natural disposition, I was induced to join in the society of my neighbours. But how bitter was the mortification I suffered, when some one near me would stand listening to the tones of a flute, which I could not hear; or to the shepherd's song, sounding from the valley, not one note of which I could distinguish! Such occurrences had the effect of driving me almost to despair; nay, even raised in my mind

gloomy thoughts of seeking relief in self-destruction. It was nothing but my art that restrained me; it appeared impossible for me to quit the world till I had accomplished the objects I felt myself, as it were, destined to fulfil. Thus did I continue to drag on a miserable existence; truly miserable, inasmuch as, with so sensitive a constitution of body, any sudden change was capable of hurrying me into the most violent extremes. Yes, Patience, I must take thee for my guide; I hope to follow thy dictates, and persevere to the end, till it shall please the inexorable Fates to cut the thread of my existence. Yes, be it for better or for worse, I am prepared to meet the issue. For one in his twenty-eighth year* to become a philosopher, is no easy task; and still more difficult is it for an artist than for any other man.

* * * * *

“I hereby declare you the joint heirs of the little property, if so it can be called, which I have been able to lay up. Share it equally and justly; live in harmony together, and assist each other. Whatever you may have done against me, be assured that it has long since been forgiven. I thank you in particular, my dear brother Carl, for the affectionate attentions I have received from you of late. It is my sincere hope and wish that you may lead a life more free from cares and sorrows than mine has been. Teach your children to love Virtue; she alone, and not perishable gold, can make them truly happy. I speak it feelingly, and from

* There seems to be a mistake here, probably in the transcription; for Beethoven's biographers give 1770 as the date of his birth.

experience ; it was her hand that upheld me in the midst of the ills of life. To her influence, next to that of my art, do I owe the blessing of not having terminated my existence by suicide. Live morally, and love one another."

Beethoven's character, as described by those who had means of knowing it, was what might be expected from these sentiments, so strikingly expressed by himself. Persons who had any claims on his attentions never failed to receive them. We ourselves know more than one individual, who, though not musical, nor possessed of any attainments calculated to render their society peculiarly agreeable to him, but merely in consequence of introductions from persons in England whom he knew, were received by him with great courtesy, and treated with anxious and persevering kindness. A pleasing sketch of him, in this point of view, is contained in a letter from an English lady, who gives an account of a visit she paid him in October, 1825.* She was introduced to him as the daughter of a person whom he respected, and went to visit him at the village of Baden, near Vienna, where he generally resided during a part of the year.

"The people," she says, "seemed surprised at our taking so much trouble ; for, unaccountable as it may seem to those who have any knowledge of or taste in music, his reign in Vienna is over, except in the hearts of a chosen few ; and I was even taught to expect a rough, uncereemonious reception. When we arrived, he had just returned home, through a shower of rain, and was changing his coat. I almost began to be alarmed,

* *Harmonicon*, Dec. 1825.

after all that I had heard of his *brusquerie*, lest he should not receive us very cordially, when he came forth from his sanctum, with a hurried step, and apparently very nervous ; but he addressed us in so gentle, so courteous, so sweet a manner, and with such a truth in his sweetness, that I only know Mr. * * * with whom he can be compared. He is very short, extremely thin, and sufficiently attentive to personal appearance. He observed that * * * was very fond of Handel ; that he himself also *loved* him ; and proceeded for some time in eulogizing that great composer. I conversed with him in writing, for I found it impossible to render myself audible ; and though this was a very clumsy mode of communicating, it did not much signify, as he talked on freely and willingly, and did not wait for questions, or seem to expect long replies. I ventured to express my admiration of his compositions, and, among others, praised his *Adelaide*, in terms by no means too strong for my sense of its beauties. He very modestly remarked that the poetry was beautiful.

“ When we were about to retire, he desired us to stop ; — ‘ *Je veux vous donner un souvenir de moi.*’ He then went to a table in an adjoining room, and wrote two lines of music,—a little fugue for the piano-forte,—and presented it to me in the most amiable manner. He afterwards desired that I would spell my name to him, that he might inscribe his impromptu to me correctly. He now took my arm, and led me into the room where he had written, that I might see the whole of his apartments, which were quite that of an author, but perfectly clean ; and, though indicating nothing like superfluity

of wealth, did not show any want of either useful furniture or neatness in arrangement. It must be recollected, however, that this is his country residence, and that the Viennese are not so costly or particular in their domestic details as we English. I led him back very gently to a room on the other side, in which was placed his grand piano-forte, presented to him by Messrs. Broadwood; but he looked, I thought, melancholy at the sight of it, and said that it was very much out of order, for the country tuner was exceedingly bad. He struck some notes to convince me; nevertheless, I placed on the desk the page of manuscript music which he had just given me, and he played it through quite simply, but prefaced it by three or four chords,—such handfuls of notes!—that would have gone to Mr. * * *’s heart. He then stopped; and I would not on any account ask for more, as I found that he played without any satisfaction to himself. We took leave of each other in a tone of what in France would be called confirmed friendship; and he said, quite voluntarily, that, if he came to England, he would certainly pay us a visit.”

Beethoven’s literary attainments were respectable. He was well acquainted with the literature of his own country, and read, in the original language, the Italian poets. He also understood English, and had a knowledge of our best authors. During the illness which terminated in his death, he amused himself, in his intervals of ease, by reading the ancient Greek writers, and the novels of Walter Scott. In the society of his friends, when he was able to shake off his habitual reserve, his conversation was animated, full of interest-

ing anecdotes, and acute observations. He was incapable of the slightest duplicity or meanness, and was esteemed by all who knew him for his high principles, and the undeviating rectitude of his conduct.

As a musician, Beethoven must be classed along with Handel, Haydn, and Mozart. He alone is to be compared to them in the magnitude of his works, and their influence on the state of the art. Though he has written little in the department to which Handel devoted all the energies of his mind, yet his spirit, more than that of any other composer, is akin to that of Handel. In his music there is the same gigantic grandeur of conception, the same breadth and simplicity of design, and the same absence of minute finishing and petty details. In Beethoven's harmonies, the masses of sound are equally large, ponderous, and imposing as those of Handel, while they have a deep and gloomy character peculiar to himself. As they swell in our ears, and grow darker and darker, they are like the lowering storm-cloud, on which we gaze till we are startled by the flash, and appalled by the thunder which bursts from its bosom. Such effects he has especially produced in his wonderful symphonies; they belong to the tone of his mind, and are without a parallel in the whole range of music. Even where he does not wield the strength of a great orchestra,—in his instrumental concerted pieces, his quartets, his trios, and his sonatas for the piano-forte, there is the same broad and massive harmony, and the same wild, unexpected, and startling effects. Mingled with these, in his orchestral as well as his chamber music, there are strains of melody inexpressibly impassioned and

ravishing ;—strains which do not merely please, but dissolve in pleasure ; which do not merely move, but overpower with emotion. Of these divine melodies, a remarkable feature is their extreme simplicity : a few notes, as artless as those of a national air, are sufficient to awake the most exquisite feelings.

The music of Beethoven is stamped with the peculiarities of the man. When slow and tranquil in its movement, it has not the placid composure of Haydn, or the sustained tenderness of Mozart ; but it is grave, and full of deep and melancholy thought. When rapid, it is not brisk or lively, but agitated and changeful,—full of “sweet and bitter fancies,”—of storm and sunshine,—of bursts of passion sinking into the subdued accents of grief, or relieved by transient gleams of hope or joy. There are movements, indeed, to which he gives the designation of *scherzoso*, or playful ; but this playfulness is as unlike as possible to the constitutional jocularity to which Haydn loved to give vent in the *finales* of his symphonies and quartets. If, in a movement of this kind, Beethoven sets out in a tone of gaiety, his mood changes involuntarily,—the smile fades away, as it were, from his features,—and he falls into a train of sombre ideas, from which he ever and anon recovers himself, as if with an effort, and from a recollection of the nature of his subject. The rapid *scherzos*, which he has substituted for the older form of the minuet, are wild, impetuous, and fantastic ; they have often the air of that violent and fitful vivacity to which gloomy natures are liable ; their mirth may be compared to that of the bacchanalian effusion of the doomed Caspar. They, contain, how-

ever, many of Beethoven's most original and beautiful conceptions; and are strikingly illustrative of the character of his mind.

The works composed by Beethoven in the latter years of his life are not so generally known or relished as his earlier productions. These earlier compositions are clear in design, and so broad and simple in their effects, that, when they receive justice from the performers, they at once strike every one who is susceptible of the influence of music. In his more recent works, his meaning is obscure, and in many instances, incomprehensible. He has cast away all established models, and not only thrown his movements into new and unprecedented forms, but has introduced the same degree of novelty into all their details. The phrases of his melody are new; his harmonies are new; his disposition of parts is new; and his sudden changes of time, of measure, and of key, are frequently not explicable on any received principles of the art.

The imagination is defined by metaphysicians as the faculty which enables us to create new forms, by throwing the parts of existing objects into new combinations*; but, in order that the new creation may be

* "The province of conception is to present us with an exact transcript of what we have formerly felt and perceived; that of imagination, to make a selection of qualities and of circumstances from a variety of different objects, and, by combining and disposing these, to form a new creation of its own."—"An uncommon degree of imagination constitutes *poetical genius*; a talent, which, although chiefly displayed in poetical composition, is also the foundation (though not precisely in the same manner) of various other arts."—"A cultivated taste, combined with a creative ima-

comprehensible, all its parts must be previously familiar to the mind. The wildest imagination, in forming the

Gorgons, and hydras, and chimeras dire,

of the poets, can only compose them of parts, all of which exist in nature, but which nature has never placed in such fearful collocation. Originality in the arts consists in the novelty of the combinations into which the artist throws known materials. The architect, for example, creates an edifice entirely new in its general aspect, by a new disposition of those objects which are held to be constituent parts of all buildings of its class. Whatever may be its magnitude or complexity, its porticoes, its pediments, its pillars, its pilasters, must all be modelled according to forms and proportions which are prescribed by the rules of the art. If each of these parts is properly introduced with a view to its particular function, and also with a view to the site and purpose of the building, the architecture will be pure and beautiful: if the parts are so combined as to produce a general aspect different from that of any existing edifice, the architecture will be original. If the architect, in the wantonness of imagination, throw together the elementary parts of the architecture of different orders, different ages, and different countries,—if he blend the Grecian portico, the Gothic arch, the cupola, and the minaret, he will pro-

gination, constitutes genius in the fine arts. Without taste, imagination could produce only a random analysis and combination of our conceptions; and without imagination, taste would be destitute of the faculty of invention.”—DUGALD STEWART.

duce an architectural "chimera," which, however monstrous, may possess a certain wild and fantastic beauty, like the fictions of the poets, or arabesques of the painters. But endeavour to imagine a building, which shall be new in all its parts as well as its entire form, —a building *not* composed of the parts belonging to any order of architecture; and, if it is possible to imagine such a thing, it will be a mere mass of deformity. There are many styles in music; but every composition, whatever may be its style, in order to be beautiful or expressive, must consist of those elementary phrases of melody, or harmonic combinations, the beauty or expression of which the listener has already felt; and the originality of the work will depend on the novelty of the forms into which these elements are thrown.

Nature herself has dictated the simple forms of melody; and that which constitutes "the concord of sweet sounds," is fixed by immutable laws. Caprice, and the love of change, may lead to arbitrary deviations from these principles, but such deviations are always temporary, and end in a return to the natural standards of taste. It was by listening to the beautiful, but hitherto neglected popular airs, which had been sung for ages among the hills and valleys of their country, that the Italian musicians of the sixteenth century formed that school of melody "which enchants the world;" and it is by digging deeper into the rich mine of national song, that the most modern composers have discovered inexhaustible stores of the materials of melody. Beethoven's most beautiful works draw much of the originality of their character from the traits of national

song with which they abound*. But when he has attempted, in his latest productions, to attain originality by an entire novelty in his musical phrases themselves, he has failed in his object of giving delight, because he has presented objects, the forms of which do not pre-exist in the mind of the listener, associated with the ideas of beauty or expression. A piece of music, entirely constructed in this manner, would be analogous to a building destitute of the elementary forms of architecture. The one would be a fit residence for the king of a tribe of African savages; the other would be a suitable entertainment for his ears. But none of Beethoven's works are entirely constructed in this way. Even in those which appear the most extravagant and incomprehensible,—in which we can neither discover a regular form, nor an intelligible design,—and which

* “Those singular phrases or progressions of melody which are particularly characteristic of national music, and were once supposed to be incapable of any alliance with regular harmony, are now becoming common in the most scientific works of the greatest composers. The music of Beethoven and Weber is full of them; and it may be mentioned as a curious instance, that the subject of the allegro movement of the second quartet by the former, dedicated to Count Rasoumoffsky, is almost the same as a very wild Javanese air, which our musical readers, who may be desirous to trace the coincidence, will find in Crawford's *History of the Indian Archipelago*. Numberless passages of a similar kind may be pointed out, accompanied with full harmony, and made subject to the strictest laws of counterpoint.”—*Harmonicon*, January, 1828.—We have traced the coincidence between Beethoven's passage and the Indian air; and (without speaking of other instances) we may refer to the Turkish air which forms the subject of one of the chorusses in *Oberon*.

contain phrases and passages which convey no ideas either of melody or harmony, we are ever and anon enchanted with both melody and harmony of the purest, simplest, and most exquisite kind; and we regret that so much beauty should be mingled with what we cannot help feeling to be actual deformity.

But, it will be said, music of an original character is never appreciated at first. The works of Haydn and Mozart, and the earlier compositions of Beethoven himself, which are now in general favour, were, in their novelty, looked upon as strange and extravagant. This, however, arose from these works being more complex in their forms, and demanding more skilful execution than their precursors. The bounds of melody were enlarged by the development of the powers of instruments; and the growing skill of performers enabled them not only to execute passages that formerly would have been deemed impossible, but to untwist the most complicated chains of harmony. For such performers as these, the works we speak of were composed, and by such they were comprehended and relished from the first. But, in the hands of ordinary performers, a concerted vocal piece, a quartet, or a symphony of one of those composers was a mere mass of confusion; and, as they themselves could neither perform it nor understand it, it was, of course, equally incomprehensible to their audience. Wherever, however, these pieces were really performed, they were instantly understood.* Innume-

* The introduction of Mozart's music into Italy is an illustration of this. About the year 1807, his opera of the *Seraglio* was attempted at Milan; but neither singers nor players could perform it either in time or tune. The concerted pieces and

rable amateurs are now able to execute them with more correctness and effect than the ordinary professional artists of the period when they appeared : and they give delight to every one whose musical taste has received the most moderate cultivation ; because their elementary phrases, though drawn from a greater variety of sources, and more varied in their combinations than before, already have their types in the mind of the hearer, and thus instantly excite the feeling of beauty. The extreme simplicity and *naturalness* of Beethoven's melody, we have already had occasion to point out as a peculiar feature of his most admired works ; and hence it arises,

finales were a mass of confusion and discord ; though two or three airs were intelligibly performed, and gave pleasure. The effect of the whole, however, was shocking ; and Mozart's music was hooted. Some time afterwards, a noble amateur, who was told by his correspondents at Vienna, that Mozart really was a great musician, determined to give his music a trial. He got together a few of the best instrumentalists he could find, and half-a-dozen singers, and engaged them to study in his palace, and in strict privacy, the *finale* to the first act of *Don Giovanni*. After some months' hard practice, they were able to go through it correctly ; and the prince, who had taste, was charmed with it. He then began to talk in society about Mozart's genius ; and, as his extraordinary notions met with the opposition he wanted, he got some of his adversaries into a wager, by engaging to have a piece of Mozart's performed, which certain umpires should admit to be excellent. The prince's wager was, of course, laughed at by everybody ; but when the day of decision came, he invited a large party to his country-house, produced his performers, and had the piece executed. The wager was decided in his favour by acclamation ; and it was owing, in no small degree, to the sensation caused by this occurrence, that Mozart's operas began to be successfully represented and understood in Italy.

that there is no music, belonging to the highest department of the art in its modern state, more easily comprehended, and more powerfully felt by a promiscuous assembly. There is thus no analogy between the case of the compositions in question, and the latest works of Beethoven. The truth appears to be, that, in consequence of his total exclusion from the audible world during his latter years, not only must his mind have been deprived of that constant supply of new ideas, derived from the hearing of actual sounds, which is the daily food of the imagination, but the ideas accumulated during his earlier years must have gradually faded away from his memory.

If, then, the view which we have taken of the later works of Beethoven is correct, it seems less probable that they will gradually gain popularity, than that they will fall into oblivion ; leaving, however, enough behind them to secure the undying fame of the author.

On this subject much difference of opinion prevails, even among the most enlightened judges of the art. In regard to one point, we have found many musicians, of the very highest pretensions to knowledge and taste, agreed, namely, that the works in question contain much matter, *at present* incomprehensible, mingled with their beauties : but some, reasoning from the progressive state of music, conclude that the development of Beethoven's mysteries is reserved for a future time. This opinion is expressed in a masterly paper on "Beethoven," in the 8th volume of the *Foreign Quarterly Review*, a journal distinguished for the excellence of its musical criticism. "Music," says the writer, "is now in a state to afford a clue to the meaning of elabo-

rate compositions, which before seemed to be one labyrinth of inextricable doubt and error; and we would fain hope that such of Beethoven's later works as still remain incomprehensible, are only conceived in some exalted region of the fancy beyond the flight of ordinary imagination. When the solution of difficulties is found in the gradual refinement and progress of an intellectual taste, such a deduction is surely not unreasonable; and we confidently expect that time will dispel the mists which yet envelop the composer's meaning in his posthumous quartets, his last grand mass, and his symphony with a chorus,—works in which he has pushed to extremity the usual license and audacity of his harmony." In the hope thus expressed we would gladly participate: but whether it is well founded, or whether the progress of music, taking a different direction, will leave for ever in their present obscurity the fantastic effusions of this great musician's imagination, is a question which time alone can decide.

It is in his symphonies that the powers of Beethoven's genius are most fully displayed. The symphony in C minor stands alone and unrivalled; and the *Sinfonia Pastorale* is probably the finest piece of descriptive music in existence. Every movement of this charming work is a scene, and every scene is full of the most beautiful images of rural nature and rural life. We feel the freshness of a summer morning. We hear the rustling of the breeze, the waving of the woods, the cheerful notes of birds, and cries of animals. We stray along the margin of a meandering brook, and listen to the murmuring of its waters. We join a group of villagers, keeping holiday with joyous songs and dances. The

sky grows dark, the thunder growls, and a storm bursts on the alarmed rustics, whose cries of dismay are heard amidst the strife of the elements. The clouds pass away; the muttering of the thunder is more and more distant; all becomes quiet and placid; and the stillness is broken by the pastoral song of gratitude. Nothing can be more beautiful or more true to nature than every part of this representation. It requires no key, no explanation,—but places every image before the mind with a distinctness which neither poetry nor painting could surpass, and with a beauty which neither of them could equal.

In his chamber compositions,—his quintets, quartets, and trios, for bowed instruments, and especially in his splendid series of works for the piano-forte,—Beethoven has left to the amateurs of music an inexhaustible fund of delight. He has shown that this instrument has powers which it was formerly not imagined to possess, and has made it the means of producing effects which neither those who have preceded, nor those who have followed him, have been able to reach.

Beethoven's greatest vocal composition is the musical drama, or oratorio, *The Mount of Olives*. Some parts of this work are more in the theatrical than the ecclesiastical style, and some of the scenes would require dramatic action to give them their full effect. But it bears the impress of his mighty genius. The gloomy sounds of the opening symphony, sinking into a silence broken only by the slow and measured strokes of the drum, are sufficient to banish every wandering thought, to fill the most indifferent auditor with awe, and to prepare his mind for the strain so full of woe, which expresses the

passion of the Redeemer. In the original form of the piece, the Divine Person himself is supposed to speak this language of intense suffering ; but this, though not inconsistent with continental notions, is very properly viewed in a different light in England. This passage, therefore is delivered in the third person, so as to be a description, by another, of the agony it is meant to express ; and the design of the author is necessarily sacrificed to a right sense of religious decorum. Considered as a drama, containing scenes of intense interest, and full of the deepest feeling, *The Mount of Olives* leaves nothing to be desired ; but, when heard in a church it wants the sustained gravity and solemnity of the ecclesiastical style. Almost the only parts of it, indeed, which really belong to that style, are the instrumental symphony at the commencement, and the concluding chorus "*Hallelujah to the Father*," which is full of sublime simplicity.

Beethoven composed two masses. The first is well known, and justly considered a most sublime composition. The second which was published after his death, has hardly ever, we believe, been attempted ; nor, indeed, has any one been able to comprehend its meaning.

Beethoven produced only one opera, *Fidelio* ; the other, *Melusina*, on which he appears to have been for some time employed, never having seen the light. *Fidelio* is well known in this country, from the manner in which it was performed in the original language, by the excellent German company who attracted so much attention in London during the seasons of 1832 and 1833, and, more recently, from the exquisite singing and acting of Madame Malibran, when the opera was

brought out at Drury-lane theatre in an English dress. In one respect, it surpasses any opera that we are acquainted with,—its deep dramatic interest, and its effect on the feelings. The character of *Leonora*, the tender, faithful, heroic wife, is even more than beautiful—it is sublime; and, at the conclusion, the tears and exclamations of the audience never fail to mark their sympathy with the rapturous joy of the re-united pair, as well as the delight they receive from the enchanting accents in which this joy is expressed. As a musical whole, *Fidelio* is not equal to the still unrivalled *Don Giovanni*; though, in many of its parts, it does not yield, either in the beauty and expression of the melodies, the richness and ingenuity of the choral and concerted pieces, or the power of the orchestral effects, even to that immortal production.

Beethoven died in his fifty-seventh year,—at an age when the physical strength is generally little impaired, and the mental faculties are in their full maturity and vigour; and, during a considerable part of this comparatively short life, he suffered under the total deprivation of that sense which, above all others, is necessary to the musician. When this is remembered, and contrasted with the immense magnitude of what he has achieved in his art, Beethoven cannot be looked upon as inferior in genius to any musician who has ever lived,—not even to Handel himself.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MUSIC IN GERMANY IN THE PRESENT CENTURY,
CONTINUED.—WEBER.

CARL MARIA VON WEBER was born in 1786, at Eutin, a small town in Holstein. His father, who was a violinist of some note, gave him a liberal education, and enabled him to cultivate his talents for music and painting, between which his inclinations seem, in his early years, to have been divided. His ardour in the study of painting, however, abated as his mind became more and more engrossed by his love of music. After he had acquired great skill as a piano-forte player, his father placed him under the care of Michael Haydn, brother of the illustrious Joseph Haydn, and himself a celebrated composer in the ecclesiastical style. Under him, Weber laboured earnestly ; but, according to his own account, without much success. The master was then far advanced in years, and of an austere disposition. "There was too awful a distance," Weber himself says, "between the old man and the child."

At this time, in 1798, his first work was published, consisting of six *Fughetti*, or short fugues, which were favourably noticed by the *Leipsic Musical Gazette*. In the same year he went to Munich, where he received instructions from M. Kalcher, the organist of the Royal Chapel, to whom he ascribes his knowledge of the laws of counterpoint, and their ready application to practice. Under the eye of this master he composed an opera, a

grand mass, and many instrumental pieces; all which were afterwards committed to the flames. The art of lithography, recently invented, now attracted his attention; and his attempts to improve upon the invention for a time entirely occupied his mind. But his ardour in this pursuit soon subsided, and he returned to his musical labours.

At the age of fourteen he composed the opera *Das Waldmädchen* (the Wood Girl,) which was performed for the first time in November, 1800, and received with applause at Vienna, Prague, and Petersburg. The whole of the second act was composed in ten days,—“one of the unfortunate consequences,” he himself says, and the remark is worthy of being attended to, “of those marvellous anecdotes of celebrated men which act so strongly on the youthful mind, and incite to emulation.” After this he was induced, by reading an article in a musical journal, to think of composing in an ancient style, and of reviving the use of forgotten instruments. According to this plan, he composed an opera called *Peter Schmoll und seine Nachbarn* (Peter Schmoll and his neighbours), which had little success, but received the warm approbation of his old master, Michael Haydn.

Soon afterwards he visited Vienna, and mingled in the musical society of that city. He became acquainted with the Abbé Vogler, a learned and profound musician, who generously undertook to give him the benefit of his own knowledge and experience. Aided by the advice and assistance of Vogler, Weber, for two years, devoted himself to a severe study of the works of the great masters; and, during this period, published

only one or two trifles. After having finished this course of education, he received the situation of *maestro di capella* at Breslau. During his residence there he composed an opera called *Rübezahl*, or Number-Nip, the celebrated spirit, or fiend, of the Hartz mountains.

In 1806 he entered into the employment of the Duke Eugene, of Würtemberg. Here he composed several symphonies and other pieces of instrumental music. He also remodelled his opera of *The Wood Girl*, and reproduced it under the title of *Sylvana*. In 1810 he composed the opera of *Abu Hassan*, at Darmstadt. This piece, which is founded on a well known and amusing story in the "Arabian Nights," had considerable success. The tale is well dramatized, and the music light and comic. It was brought out in London some years ago, and frequently performed.

In 1813 he was employed to re-organize and direct the opera at Prague, and relinquished the management in 1816, after having accomplished the object for which he undertook it. He then received an invitation to Dresden, for the purpose of establishing a German opera in that city. He had previously declined many handsome offers from various quarters; but this invitation he accepted with alacrity, as it promised to gratify the wish he had long entertained, of placing on a proper footing the national opera of his own country. He continued to hold this situation till his death.

At Dresden he composed his far-famed *Freischütz*. He did not, however, bring it out there, but, by permission of his sovereign, at Berlin, where it was first performed in the beginning of 1822. It was received with

an enthusiasm which rapidly spread over Germany, and at once raised its author's name to the summit of popularity. His well-regulated mind bore with calmness this sudden celebrity. "I am delighted," he says, in a letter to a friend, "that my *Freischütz* has given you pleasure. I need the approbation of men of merit to stimulate me to activity. Carried to my present height by the storm of applause, I am ever in fear of a fall. How much better it is to pursue one's way in peace and quiet!" Nothing but *Der Freischütz* was performed in any theatre in Germany, and nothing but the airs from it were heard even in the streets of the smallest villages. In July, 1824, an English version of it was produced in London, at the English Operahouse, and fully gratified the highly-raised expectations of the public. On the opening of the great winter theatres, it was brought out at both of them. Each theatre had a different version of it, and in each version it was injured by wanton changes, mutilations, and interpolations, according to the prevailing usage in English adaptations of foreign operas. The great features of the piece, however, remained: it was got up with much splendour and magnificence; and, generally speaking, was well performed. It was received with an enthusiasm not inferior to that which it had excited in Germany; it made the round of all the provincial theatres; and, wherever it appeared, was played night after night to overflowing houses.

In the winter of 1822, Weber produced the musical drama of *Preciosa*, founded on a tale of Cervantes. This piece was very successful, not only at Dresden, where it was originally produced, but all over Germany. The

attempts, however, to adapt it to the French and English stage, failed, notwithstanding the beauty and romantic character of the music.

In November, 1823, the opera of *Euryanthe* was produced at Vienna, and received as warmly as the *Freischütz* had been. The applause was enthusiastic, and the composer was four times called upon the stage during the first performance. Its progress in general favour, however, was less rapid than that of the *Freischütz*. It was rather coldly received at Berlin; and the musical wits of that place punned upon its title, and called it "*L'Ennuyante!*" People were disappointed, not because they did not meet with the same excellence as in the *Freischütz*, but because it was not *the same kind* of excellence, "The effect produced by my *Euryanthe*," Weber says, in one of his letters, "is precisely what I anticipated. My indiscreet friends have, in this instance, lent their hand to my enemies, by requiring that *Euryanthe* should seduce as many as the *Freischütz* had done: both the one and the other are equally foolish in doing so." *Euryanthe*, however, was calculated to gain a lasting success, if a slow one. Its story, though it wants the attractions of *diablerie*, is interesting, and resembles that of Shakspeare's *Cymbeline*; and the music, though not capable of immediately striking the popular ear, makes a profound impression when the performers have surmounted the great difficulties of its execution*.

* This opera was performed by the German company who were in London in 1833, and received so much applause that it would certainly have had a run, had it not been brought out when the theatre was on the eve of closing.

In the year 1824 Weber undertook to compose an opera for Covent Garden theatre; and the drama of *Oberon* was written for him by Mr. Planhé. Mr. Kemble, then manager of that theatre, in the course of a tour through Germany, in which he was accompanied by Sir George Smart, went to Dresden in the month of August, 1825, for the purpose of visiting Weber, and making the final arrangements respecting this opera, which was to be brought out, under his own superintendence, in the following spring. On this occasion the travellers were witnesses of Weber's zeal for the improvement of music. He carried them to a tea-garden, the price of admission to which was a few groshen,—something about threepence English,—where a good and numerous orchestra were playing for the entertainment of the company. On his desiring them to mention any overture they wished to hear, they named one, which was played with admirable precision and effect. Weber then told them that this band was supported as a kind of nursery for instrumental performers, who entered it for a low remuneration, as vacancies in the orchestra of the opera, and other regular orchestras in the city, were filled up from it, and it afforded a supply of well-trained and experienced players.

In the prospect of Weber's coming to England, Mr. Kemble sent him, through Sir George Smart, an offer of an engagement to conduct the Covent Garden oratorios of that season. In answer, Weber, on the 4th of January, 1826, wrote Sir George:—"I cannot express the pleasure which has given me your kind letter, and the very good intentions and friendship

which you express by it. To my sorrow, however, the circumstances do not allow me to accept the proposal of our honoured friend Mr. Kemble, and the easy manner with which your goodness has made it so alluring for me. But I shall be happy enough, when I can arrive in London the first days of March with the ended *Oberon* in my pocket. With gratitude I acknowledge your repeated invitation to come to your house, and I consent gratefully to give you this burden, as it is your will*.”

On the 6th of February, Weber again wrote Sir George Smart;—“ My dear Sir, I leave Dresden the 16th February. I shall sleep every night, because I am forbidden to travel by night,—remain one day at Frankfort, and hope to arrive at Paris the 25th February. There I must remain some days, and therefore I cannot be in London, embarking at Calais, before the 5th or 6th of March. Consequently I can only accept the fair offer of our honoured friend Mr. Kemble, than for the four last oratorios, the 8th, 10th, 15th and 17th, for which I hope Mr. Kemble will accord me the round sum of one hundred pounds sterling†.

“ Beyond all this, however, I must entirely apply to your goodness; without that I would be a very helpless being. But you prove yet already by your kind letter, and the very useful advices which you give me in it,

* It has been commonly said that Weber studied the English language, for the purpose of enabling himself to compose *Oberon*. This, however, is a mistake. Weber, like most well-educated Germans, was previously well acquainted with English.

† Weber conducted five oratorios, for which he received 125%.

for which I cannot be enough indebted to you, that I can hope every aid by your friendship. Your letter shall be my direction after which I regulate myself; and Mrs. Weber is a great deal more tranquil, to see me in such hands in England, and looks upon it with hearty thanks.

“I am not attended by a servant, but Mr. Furstenau* will come along with me, and I am very glad to know that he can reside near me.

“The engagement of Mr. Braham is a very good news, and gives me great pleasure.

“If this letter goes so fast as yours, you can give me, if you think it necessary, some news at Paris, where my direction is by Maurice Schlesinger’s. And now, my dear Sir, I give you a hearty shake hands, and remain, with all regard and esteem, your’s faithfully.”

On the 5th of March, Weber arrived in London. His expected visit had excited great interest, and the attentions he received were in the highest degree gratifying to his feelings. On his arrival, in place of being required, as an alien, to present himself at the passport-office, he was waited upon and requested to give himself no trouble, as that matter had been arranged for him. He took up his abode in the house of Sir George Smart, whose attention to his comforts was unremitting.

The letters written by him, from London, to his wife, Caroline Brand, a distinguished actress, to whom he had been married for some years, give an account of everything that occurred to him at this time, and place

* An eminent performer on the flute, and an intimate friend of Weber and his family.

his character in the most amiable light. In a letter written a few days after his arrival, he describes the impression made upon him by his reception in England.

“The English way of living,” he says, “suits mine exactly; and my little stock of English, in which I make tolerable progress, is of incalculable use to me. * * * * The people are really too kind to me. No king had ever more done for him out of love; I might almost say they carry me in their arms.

“At seven o’clock in the evening, we went to Covent Garden, where *Rob Roy*, an opera after Sir Walter Scott’s novel, was played. The house is handsomely decorated, and not too large. When I came forward to the front of the stage-box, that I might have a better view of it, some one called out, ‘Weber! Weber!’ And though I drew back immediately, there followed a clamour of applause that I thought never would have ended. Then the overture to the *Freischütz* was called for, and every time I showed myself, the storm again broke loose. Fortunately, soon after the overture, *Rob Roy* began, and things gradually became more quiet. Could a man wish for more enthusiasm, or more love? I must confess that I was completely overpowered by it, though I am of a calm disposition, and somewhat accustomed to such scenes. I know not what I would have given to have had you by my side, that you might have seen me in my foreign garb of honour. And now, my dear love, I can assure you that you may be quite at ease, both as to the singers and the orchestra. Miss Paton is a singer of the first rank, and will play *Reiza* divinely. Braham not less so,

though in a totally different style. There are also several good tenors, and I really cannot see why the English singing should be so much abused. The singers have a perfectly good Italian education, fine voices, and expression. The orchestra is not remarkable, but still very good, and the chorusses particularly so. In short, I feel quite at ease as to the fate of *Oberon*."

This opera, after very careful preparation, was brought out on the 12th of April. It was admirably performed in every department, and the great powers of Braham and Miss Paton never were more fully displayed. The composer, in a letter to his wife, written the same night, describes the reception of the piece. "My best beloved Caroline!" he says, "through God's grace and assistance, I have this evening met with the most complete success. The brilliancy and affecting nature of the triumph are indescribable. God alone be thanked for it! When I entered the orchestra, the whole of the house, which was filled to overflowing, rose up, and I was saluted by huzzas, and waving of hats and handkerchiefs, which I thought would never have done. They insisted on encoring the overture. Every air was interrupted twice or thrice with bursts of applause. * * * * So much for this night, dear life, from your heartily-tired husband, who, however, could not sleep in peace till he had communicated to you this new blessing of heaven. Good night!"

During his residence in London, Weber showed great simplicity of manners, quiet and retiring habits, and a mild and cheerful temper. He greatly enjoyed the society of a few accomplished and intelligent per-

sons, but disliked gay and fashionable parties, which he always avoided, except on the very few occasions of his being invited to them as a musician, when he considered his attendance as a sacrifice to professional duty. At table he was temperate; never exceeding, after dinner, two or three glasses of port, which he preferred to every other wine, feeling, no doubt, the benefit of its cordial and restorative quality in a climate so severely trying to his feeble constitution. He greatly enjoyed, too, a glass of good porter.—He disliked the introduction of the *Freischütz* as a subject of conversation. Notwithstanding the extraordinary success of that opera; though it had been performed, times innumerable, at every theatre in Germany, and printed in a great variety of forms, he had never derived any pecuniary advantage from it whatever; and he felt sore and mortified that a work, which had profited so many, should have contributed nothing to the benefit of his family. So strong was this feeling, that to dwell on the merits or the popularity of the *Freischütz*, was the only thing that seemed capable of disturbing the gentleness of his temper. On one occasion, when a gentleman was talking a great deal of this opera, and taking credit to himself for the share he had had in bringing it out in England, Weber remarked, with some sharpness, that there was little to boast of on that score, seeing that it had been previously brought out all over the Continent.

He went one evening to a private glee-party, for the purpose of hearing a species of music for which England is pre-eminently distinguished. Many of our best glees were performed by our finest singers, but they

made, on the whole, a painful impression on him, on account of the male counter-tenor voice,—a description of voice which, he said, was unnatural and disagreeable. On the Continent, the male counter-tenor is unknown; and its novelty may naturally have produced an impression on Weber, different from that which it makes in this country, where it has long been considered essential to the production of complete vocal harmony.

At one of the great parties which he attended professionally, a lady of rank requested him, when he sat down to the piano-forte, to play the overture to the *Freischütz*, at the same time placing the music before him. Weber remarked, that it was not piano-forte music. “Why, M. Weber,” said the lady, and turned to the title-page, “it is adapted to the piano-forte by yourself.” “You are quite right, Madam,” he replied, “and I am wrong. I shall play it with pleasure.” “Well!” he afterwards remarked to a friend who stood by him, “this lady has given me a good lesson, which shows the folly of arrangements for the piano-forte.”

Braham having objected to the music originally written to the song, “O, ’tis a glorious sight to see,” as not being calculated to display his vocal powers to the best advantage, Weber, though displeased, yielded to the singer’s wish, and wrote the song as it was afterwards sung; and, having done so, said archly to a friend of Braham’s, “Now, I think I have taken the measure of your friend.” And, in truth, he had done so; for the song certainly displays all his peculiar powers, of voice, execution, and declamatory force, in

their full extent. It was, accordingly, received with acclamations by the public : but Weber never liked it, and the original song has been preserved in the opera, as performed in Germany.

Weber's music is remarkable for the discrimination and skill with which the sound is suited to the sense, on which account it ought to be closely studied and imitated by our young dramatic composers. In one of the pieces in *Oberon*, Miss Paton constantly failed to produce the effect which the author intended. "I don't know how it is," she said, "but I can never do this as it should be." "The reason is," replied Weber, "because you have not studied the words." During the rehearsal of a hymn to the Deity, some of the voices were too noisy.—"Hush, hush!" cried Weber, with true feeling and judgment, "if you were in the presence of God, would you speak so loud?"

On the occasion of his benefit concert, he was requested to compose an air to the song, "From Chindara's warbling fount I come," in Moore's *Lalla Rookh*, for the purpose of being sung by Miss Stephens. The words were brought to him in manuscript. On glancing over the lines, he immediately said, "The poetry is not right," and showed his accurate knowledge of the language, by pointing out a very minute error of the transcriber. He was so anxious to enter fully into the spirit of the verses, that, before he began to set them, he insisted on reading the whole poem from which they were extracted ; and was impressed, from this perusal, with so strong an admiration of the poet's genius, that he expressed a strong desire for his personal acquaintance. He wrote down merely the melody of this

song, with some slight indications of his design, where the vocal phrases were separated by little passages of symphony: and, from this manuscript, it was sung by Miss Stephens at the concert, with his own piano-forte accompaniment. We have seen this interesting relic of Weber, in the possession of Sir George Smart. The song was published after his death, with an accompaniment for the piano-forte by Mr. Moscheles.

Weber was now in the last stage of the fatal malady under which he had long laboured. It was a pulmonary disease, which had been aggravated by the fatigues of a long journey and the severity of a climate, to which he was unaccustomed. "To-day," he says to his wife on the 17th of April, "is enough to be the death of any one. A thick, dark, yellow fog overhangs the sky, so that one can hardly see, in the house, without candles. The sun stands powerless, like a ruddy point in the clouds. No,—there is no living in this climate. The longing I feel for Hosterwitz and the clear air is indescribable. But patience, patience,—one day rolls on after another; two months are already over. I have formed an acquaintance with Dr. Kind, a nephew of our own Kind. He is determined to make me well. God help me! that will never be in this life. I have lost all hope in physicians and their art. Repose is my best doctor, and henceforth it shall be my sole object to obtain it."

Oberon continued to draw good houses, but its popularity was not equal to that of the *Freischütz*. The composer, while he was the delight of the small circle of musical friends among whom he lived, was disqualified, by his feelings, habits, and manners, from sharing

in the golden harvest so abundantly reaped by foreign favourites among the English aristocracy. His feelings were too high, his habits too retiring, and his manners too plain and simple, to enable him to profit by their liberality. He was willing to increase the emoluments of his long and painful journey to England, by attending private parties for the usual remuneration to artists of distinction: but he was not willing to seek invitations to such parties by paying court to their givers; and the consequence was, that two or three such invitations were all he received. On the 26th of May, he had a benefit concert; and on this occasion, when it might naturally have been expected that an overflowing audience would have testified the sentiments of the English public towards one of the greatest musicians who had ever visited our shores, the room was not more than half filled*. Weber, struggling at

* On the same evening a favourite singer had his benefit concert at the mansion of one of the nobility. About four hundred persons, chiefly of the fashionable world, were present; the tickets being one guinea each. Weber's concert was by no means unproductive; the net profit of it being about 130%. This arose from the zeal and liberality of a very small number of persons, each of whom purchased a considerable number of tickets, and some of them sent sums beyond the value of the tickets they took; while, from the spirit with which the profession volunteered their assistance, the expense of an excellent orchestra and a strong body of solo performers was trifling. But the number of tickets sold was just *three hundred*, and there were not more than that number of persons in the room. The subsequent performance of *Oberon*, at Covent Garden, for the benefit of Weber's widow and children, did not defray the expenses. W. Ward, Esq., then member for the city of London, not only paid Weber twenty-five guineas for composing the air sung by

once with illness and with suppressed feelings of disappointment and mortification, was hardly able to get through the business of the evening, as conductor. At the end of the concert, he threw himself on a sofa, in a state of exhaustion which filled his surrounding friends with alarm.

His whole thoughts were now turned towards his home, and his impatience to be once more in the bosom of his family was extreme. On the 30th of May, a few days after his concert, he writes—"Dearest Lina! excuse the shortness and hurry of this, I have so many things on hand. Writing is painful to me; my hands tremble so. Already too, I am beginning to get impatient. You will not receive any more letters from me. Address your answer, not to London, but to Frankfort, *poste restante*. You are surprised. Yes, I don't go by Paris. What should I do there? I cannot move,—I cannot speak,—all business I must give up for years. Then better, better, the straight way to my home,—by Calais, Brussels, Cologne, and Coblenz, up the Rhine to Frankfort,—a delightful journey. Though I must travel slowly, resting sometimes half a day, I think, in a fortnight, by the end of June, I shall be in your arms. If God will, we shall leave this on the 12th of June, if Heaven will only grant me a little strength. Well, everything will go better if we are once on the way,—once out of this wretched climate. I embrace you from my heart, my dear ones,—ever

Miss Stephens at the concert, but sent twenty guineas for his tickets. This was a solitary instance of munificence on the part of our aristocratic and wealthy "patrons of music." But Weber was not *the fashion*.

your loving father, Charles." On the 2nd of June, he wrote again, and this was the last letter he ever wrote. "As this letter will need no answer, it will be short enough. Need no answer! Think of that! Furstenau has given up the idea of his concert; so perhaps we shall be with you two days sooner:—huzza! God bless you all, and keep you well! O, were I only among you! I kiss you in thought, dear mother. Love me also, and think always of your Charles, who loves you above all things."

This joyful hope was destined never to be realized. On the morning of the 5th of June, Weber was found dead in his bed. His disease had not assumed an immediately alarming form till the day on which he wrote the above letter, when it compelled him to keep his room; but his spirits were not much depressed. His appetite was good, and he did not appear to be sensible of approaching danger. His anxiety to return to his country and his family became stronger and stronger; and he was more cheerful, as the obstacles to his departure appeared to be removed. When his friend, M. Furstenau, left him at eleven o'clock on the night of his death, he was in good spirits, and showed no symptoms of immediate danger.

Sir George Smart had a female servant who used to nurse Weber, and attend sedulously to his comforts, and whom, consequently, he regarded with much kindness. This woman, knowing his situation, was very unwilling that he should lock the door of his bed-room; and, on this evening, on his going to bed, begged him not to lock his door, which he said he should not do. In the morning, the servant told her

master that Weber's door was locked, and that she had knocked repeatedly without receiving any answer. Suspecting the fatal occurrence, Sir George sent for M. Furstcnau and Mr. Moscheles, who arrived immediately. The door was then forced open, and Weber was found in his bed, quite dead, but lying with his hand under his head, as if he were in a tranquil sleep. Mr. Robinson, a neighbouring surgeon, was sent for, who said that Weber must have been dead for some time and must have died without pain or suffering. On the same day an inspection of the body took place, in order to ascertain the cause of his death, and the result was stated in the following certificate:—

“On opening the body of C. M. Von Weber, we found an ulcer on the left side of the larynx, the lungs almost universally diseased, filled with tubercles, of which many were in a state of suppuration, with two vomicæ—one about the size of a common egg, the other smaller, which was a quite sufficient cause of his death.

“T. TONCKEN, M. D.

CHARLES F. FORBES, M.D.

P. M. KIND, M.D.

W. ROBINSON, Surgeon.”

On the 21st of June, his remains were interred in the vaults below the Roman Catholic Chapel, in Moorfields. The procession was attended by a numerous body of his friends and professional brethren; Sir George Smart being chief mourner. The funeral service, in which the *Requiem* of Mozart was performed by a large vocal and instrumental band, took place in the presence of two thousand persons, by whom the chapel

was filled; and the ceremony was solemn and impressive.

The effect may be imagined of the tidings of his death on the amiable woman whom he loved so dearly, received by her when she was watching for the moment of his return.

The impression made by this intelligence at Dresden will be seen by the following letter, written to Sir George Smart by M. Boettiger, counsellor of the court of the king of Saxony, a friend of Weber's family.

“Dresden, June 15th, 1826.

“Sir,—I never imagined that I should write to you, whose personal acquaintance since we saw you at Mr. Weber's table has been so dear to me, in such a painful heart-breaking affair. Yesterday the news of Mr. Weber's death arrived here. All Europe will condole. A burst of grief is in the whole town. Tears are flowing from every cheek. We all boasted in the possession of the man who enjoyed an European reputation. But all this is nothing to the grief of poor Mrs. Weber. She came to town this morning quite in a desponding state, and charged me with the most heartfelt expressions of her gratitude towards you, Sir, for all the kindness you have shown to him from his first entrance in your hospitable dwelling till the last moment of a life, which, I am afraid, has been embittered with many disappointments, flowing, perhaps, from the public distress your country has been labouring under in the three last months, and from engagements rather rashly contracted. By the bye, it is much to be wished for, that you may find leisure enough to give

me some explanation about Mr. Weber's transactions with Mr. C. Kemble; a common report, but not originating from Mr. Weber's letters, who kept a persevering silence on this point, having been spread over all Germany, that Mr. Kemble did not act well with Mr. Weber. I cannot believe it, because you, Sir, have been witness of the engagement made at Embs, and how confidentially Mr. Weber, who never meddled with money affairs, and did not know what could be asked for in England, relied on the *bona fides* of a gentleman. Now give me leave to observe, that it is for the honour of your country that such rumours may be contradicted. We understand that poor Mr. Weber's concert, the 27th of May, has been very thinly attended, notwithstanding the ample promises from every side that even in the present circumstances it would be highly patronised, and that his benefit in Covent Garden theatre was fixed precisely on the day he expired. Dare I put to you the question, if the benefit cannot take place still, before the close of the season, arranged in such a manner, that in commemoration of the loyalty of a man who sacrificed his life to the strict fulfilment of his engagement, the house may be crowded still, and bring a good round sum? For I can assure you, that Mr. Weber leaves only a trifle to his widow and two uneducated sons, and that only for the purpose to find some recompense in the generosity of your nation, and—let me add—your king himself, who never gave an answer to his putting the self-same cantata, now brought forward in his concert, at its first appearance, at his majesty's feet. All these things are no secret among us, and will be told over and over

again in our papers. Mrs. Weber confides entirely in your prudence and benevolence. She takes her two fondlings, Max and Alexander, in her arms, and presents them to you, that you may be kind to them as you have been to their father. She is fully convinced that, by your influence and powerful mediation, something still may be gained for the orphans deprived now of all the aid of a father much celebrated by fame, but not favoured by fortune. The counsellor of the Saxon embassy, now resident in London, Mr. Biederman, has much ardour, I understand, to assist and offer his services in anything which may suffer some delay or put a stop to the speedy departure of that excellent man M. Furstenau, Mr. Weber's fellow-traveller and companion. May you have a moment to spare to bestow upon me the favour of a full answer, which I may communicate to Mrs. Weber. I am*, &c.

Mrs. Weber herself wrote to Sir George Smart in the following terms :

“ Esteemed Sir and friend,—You will attribute it to my overpowering grief for the loss of the best of husbands, if I neglected every duty during the first days after I heard of the mournful event ; if I thought of nothing but my deplorable situation—of no one but my departed lord. Mr. Boettiger has been so good as to convey to you the expressions of my sincere and everlasting gratitude for the incomparable kindness and friendship which you have had for my dear husband ; but my heart prompts me to repeat them myself,

* This is a precise transcript of the original English.

though I am not able to couch them in the terms of your own language. May Almighty God reward you for all you have done for him and for us! It is the greatest blessing with which my good husband could depart from us, that he acquired such friends for his family. If my boys grow up to be good men, worthy of touching the ashes of such a father, they may, perhaps, personally express to you their gratitude and their mother's, who, by that time, will have long since gone home to the Father of all. These poor orphans are the only ties remaining between the world and myself. For their sake their father sacrificed his life; for them shall I bear the burthen of cheerless days to the end of mine.

“You will oblige me by assuring Dr. Kind and Mr. Göschen of my best thanks. Weber has frequently mentioned in his letters the kind solicitude of these faithful friends, and my anxiety for him was much relieved by knowing that he was under your and their care. May God grant them also his blessings for their affectionate kindness. We have but feeble words to thank them, but never can we forget how much we are indebted to you and them.—Farewell, honoured friend: May your life be happier than ours! For ever gratefully your's, LINA VON WEBER.”

As it appeared from M. Boettiger's letter, that very erroneous impressions existed in Germany respecting Weber's treatment in England, and especially respecting his transactions with the manager of Covent Garden theatre, Sir George Smart put that letter into the hands of M. Furstenau, who, from his intimate knowledge of

everything connected with Weber's affairs, was in a condition to give the fullest information on the subject. M. Furstenau, accordingly, wrote to M. Boettiger the following letter :

“ *London, 3rd July, 1826.*

“ My dear Sir and friend,—Your letter to Sir George Smart has been kindly communicated to me by him, and I was surprised that you, and, as you say, all Germany, have a false view of the circumstances between Von Weber and C. Kemble. I, the impartial and constant companion of Weber, may be permitted to prove to you the contrary, as I knew everything correctly from our late friend himself ; and you will allow me, therefore, my worthy friend, to answer your letter *seriatim*. It is very praiseworthy in you that you thank Sir George in the name of Madame Von Weber, for his uncommon reception and treatment of the deceased ; only I should have liked to see it done more cordially and gratefully, since I can assure you that Sir George considered no sacrifice too great to serve him, not only during his lifetime, but equally so after his lamented death ; the former of which Weber himself has constantly acknowledged to me with emotion ; and I can well judge of it, since I often witnessed Sir George's sympathy, which showed his admiration of Weber's talents and virtues. The conduct of Mr. Kemble and his family has been the same ; and I often witnessed the happy and cheerful hours that Weber spent in this circle. Respecting his engagement about *Oberon*, and his coming here, the conduct of the managers of Covent Garden has been remarkably kind, having done a great deal beyond their obligation. The sum which Weber received for

this opera, has *never* been paid by this theatre before ; and, judging of all the circumstancees, such as I now know them, the payment has been a very decent one, and could not have been more, since, notwithstanding the great interest inspired by the piece, the expenses which it caused have not yet been repaid, and every one who knows London acknowledges that Mr. Kemble has made rather a disadvantageous bargain. People in Germany think London is paved with gold ; I was once of this opinion myself, and a person must have lived here to be able to judge. M. Von Weber's coming here did not form a part of the contract, but was a private speculation of his own ; and the theatre, by allowing him to direct several times, giving him to earn a sum of 380*l.*, and moreover granting him a benefit, deserves more thanks from Germany than it now receives. M. Von Weber was always highly satisfied with the conduct of the theatre towards him, and said to me repeatedly, 'they are doing their utmost for me ;' on which account he also never showed the letter which you wrote to him in English, as it contained so much about this subject, and he saw that he ought not to offend the managers in return for their kind endeavours for him. After his lamented death, too, the promised benefit was given for the advantage of his family, and it was the fault of the public, and not theirs, that neither this nor his concert turned out well. You, and all of us should rather be angry with our own countrymen in London, for their taking so little interest in Weber ; for it will be an eternal disgrace to them that *they* did not fill a concert-room holding no more than 600 persons. Indeed this lack of interest went so far, that

even those to whom we had been recommended, and among these your own friends, showed nothing of that common attention which is expected even from the illiterate. The Counsellor Winkler will be able to give you some details on this subject from my letters. As to the cantata sent by Weber to the king, it happened—as it generally does when things of that kind are sent to great personages without their permission being previously obtained,—they remain in most cases without an answer. Beethoven experienced the same thing here. I know that Sir George Smart has taken, even during Weber's life, several ineffectual steps about it.

“It grieves me much to see these excellent people, mentioned in this letter, so deeply hurt by yours; and I consider it your duty, my very worthy friend, now when you must think differently on this subject, to tranquillize their minds immediately by a few heartfelt lines; nor shall I fail, on my return, to do justice publicly to the extraordinary interest they have shown.”

On this letter being communicated to Madame Weber, she immediately wrote to Sir George Smart;—“To my great astonishment and affliction, I have perceived from M. Furstenau's letter, that the letter of Mr. Boettiger has given dissatisfaction both to you, dear Sir, and to Mr. Kemble, instead of containing nothing but expressions of gratitude for your kindness. Gracious Heaven! are we not already miserable enough? Must our friends, by their endeavours to serve us, render us still more wretched, and make us appear ungrateful in your eyes? Convinced as I am of Mr. Boettiger's excellent disposition, I am persuaded that, seeing us in this state of

sorrow, and wishing to assist us to the utmost of his power, his zeal was excited to such a degree as to mislead him in his choice of the best means for that purpose. It is true that my dear husband himself, all our friends, *and the public*, have been disappointed in their expectations as to the result for Weber of this journey; and, more especially, no one will believe that Weber really got no more than 500*l.* for the opera and the copyright of it for all England. Weber seemed to make a secret of it while he was in Germany, perhaps under the impression that his friends might disapprove of the terms he had accepted: he has *never* complained of it in his letters from London; he was too proud to do that. Indeed it would be unjust even to murmur at it, as it was at his option to compose for this price or to refuse it. But do not censure too severely his friends, who were so much attached to him, if the idea that 'he risked his life for this sum' renders them rather unjust; and, more especially, do not blame us, as we have no share in the complaints, and were perfectly ignorant of the contents of that letter. To you, as the friend of my beloved husband, I earnestly recommend the interest of my children. You will watch over it, I am sure, with parental care. You will not allow them to mingle tears of sorrow for themselves with those they shed for the loss of their kind father. Pray speak to Mr. Kemble on my behalf; and request him to prove, on this occasion, by kindness to the children of his friend, the affection he felt for him. Permit me again to assure you of the sincere gratitude with which I remain for ever, your's, LINA VON WEBER."

From these letters it appears that, though Weber, while in England, was neglected not only by those who, from their wealth and station, are especially called upon to encourage genius, but also by the public at large, yet the terms of the agreement which brought him to this country were honourably and liberally fulfilled, and his pecuniary emoluments were much more considerable than has been generally supposed. The neglect which he experienced arose partly from his own character, and partly from the quality of his music. He was incapable of the arts by which even genius often stoops to court favour and popularity; and the English public, though they were beginning to acquire a relish for the German school of music, were not yet in a condition to appreciate and enjoy such a work as *Oberon*. Were that noble opera to be brought out now, and to be performed as it was then, its fate, we are convinced, would be very different. If thus produced, after so long an interval, it would have all the charm of novelty, and would undoubtedly assume that place on our musical stage, which it has never ceased to hold in every part of Germany.

The last account of Weber's family that we have met with is that given by Mr. Moscheles, who visited Dresden in October, 1826, and wrote to a friend in London.*—"I visited poor Weber's widow, and found her still inconsolable for the loss of her husband. She burst into tears as soon as she saw me. What has been rumoured here, and even in England, as to their not having lived happily together, is, I can assure you, a

* *Harmonicon*, Dec. 1826.

calumny. He has left two fine young boys." The envenomed tongue of detraction none can escape ; but if ever there was a case in which such rumours were utterly groundless and malignant, it was that of Weber. Besides the two boys whom he left, he had three children, who died in their infancy.'

Weber's character may be gathered from the foregoing sketch, brief as it is, of the circumstances of his life. He was modest, gentle, and affectionate ; possessed of a strong intellect, and much firmness. His mind was highly cultivated, and his knowledge of literature considerable. In the earlier part of his life, he exercised his pen, with some distinction, as a critic, in the musical journals of that period ; and left, at his death, an unfinished work, entitled *Tonkünstlers Leben, eine Arabeske*, (the Life of a Composer, an Arabesque,) which was published, after his death, by the guardian of his children, along with an autobiographical sketch of his life, and fragments of his correspondence. This production, as its title indicates, is written in that fantastic and incoherent style to which the German literati are somewhat too much addicted : there is, too, a vague and misty air about the general speculations, also characteristic of the German literary school, which frequently renders the aim and meaning of the author difficult to come at ; and there is a good deal of laborious and overstrained humour. With all this, there are many acute and profound observations on musical subjects ; and the whole is interesting, as throwing light on the intellectual constitution of a great artist.

If the author of the *Freischütz*, *Euryanthe*, and *Oberon*, has not raised himself to the level of Beethoven

and Mozart, he is but a little lower than these mighty masters. His powerful and original genius was strengthened by a profound knowledge of his art, and his mind was enriched and fertilized, (if the expression may be allowed,) not only by a most extensive study of the works of the greatest composers, but by the closest observation of all the phenomena of nature from which musical impressions are derived. From these sources, his strong and active imagination was stored with materials which, as he lived, only became more and more exhaustless. None of his works exhibit such a richness of ideas as *Oberon*, a piece that was written when his body, wasted by disease, was sinking into the grave. Though, however, this opera may be considered the greatest of his compositions, containing strains the most tender, romantic, and impassioned, magnificent choral harmonies, and novel and beautiful orchestral effects,—and though, among those who are capable of appreciating the highest efforts of art, it has even exalted the reputation of the author of the *Freischütz*, yet it has never excited those mingled feelings of amazement and delight with which that unique production was everywhere hailed. Weber's fancy loved to wander in the regions of enchantment, and to embody the wild and fantastic images of German superstition. "Like Salvator," to adopt the language of the best criticism on the genius of Weber we have yet met with*, "he gloried in delineating the wild and savage aspects of nature, and in wandering, like Beethoven, in her sullen and more gloomy recesses. The romantic turn of his mind, inspired by his early

* *Foreign Quarterly Review*, for 1831.

studies, rendered the wild legend of the *Freischütz* perhaps the most suitable subject on which he could have employed his talents. In depicting, or rather in aggravating, the horrors of the Wolf's Glen, with its fearful omens, and all its unearthly sights and sounds, —in painting the grief and despair of his hero, and the gloomy, demoniacal spirit of the lost and abandoned Caspar, he found full scope for his peculiar talent. Were we to compare him with any of our romance writers, we should say that he possessed, though mingled with and controlled by a finer taste and far greater discretion, a congeniality of soul with Monk Lewis and Mrs. Radcliffe; and, rich as the dramatic literature of his country is in tales of superstition and *diablerie*, we think it to be regretted that he did not, at least, furnish us with another romantic opera from that prolific source." Some of the most powerful passages in *Oberon* afford striking manifestations of this peculiar turn of the author's genius. Among these are the incantation scene,—“Spirits of air,” and the fiend-like chorus, mingled with shouts of laughter, of the evoked demons; the chorus which forms the finale to the second act; and the scene in which the hero is tempted by evil spirits. In all these, we recognise in every note the author of the *Freischütz*.

Weber's instrumental accompaniments are stronger than those of Mozart. Whether this species of colouring has reached its height, or whether it will continue to increase in strength, it seems hardly possible to conjecture. Every succeeding generation of dramatic composers has added variety, richness, and force, to the effects of the orchestra; and accompaniments, at first

thought too predominant and overpowering, have come, in course of time, to be considered thin and feeble. It is grievous to think that the divine harmonies of Mozart himself may share this fate; yet, when once the accompaniments of Weber and Spohr shall be on a level with the generally-established standard of taste, those of Mozart must necessarily be below it. This, indeed, is in some measure the case already; and the time may come when the present style of orchestral writing shall give way to new forms of instrumentation, as yet undreamed of. There may, indeed, be a point beyond which the tide of innovation cannot reach, and at which it must remain, or begin to ebb. But the history of music affords no indication of any such point; and the tide still flows on as fast and as steadily as ever. One thing, however, may be said. However endless may be the changes caused by the enlargement of the bounds of harmony, and by discoveries in the use and combination of instruments, those innovations which consist in a mere accession of *noise*, have already reached their limit. The human *tympanum* can bear nothing beyond the beating of drums, and braying of trumpets and trombones, introduced by the followers of the Rossini school; and the temporary vogue of a fashion of composing which is a mere cloak for ignorance and incapacity, appears to be passing away.

CHAPTER XIX.

MUSIC IN GERMANY IN THE PRESENT CENTURY, CONTINUED.—
 SPOHR. — HUMMEL. — RIES. — MOSCHELES. — NEUKOMM. — MEYER-
 BEER. — MENDELSSOHN. — SCHNEIDER. — THE MODERN GERMAN
 SCHOOL.

THERE are many German musicians of the present century, whose names have acquired an European celebrity. Among these, the following are the most distinguished.

LOUIS SPOHR has acquired great fame, both as a performer on the violin, and as a composer. In 1820, on the invitation of the Philharmonic Society, he visited London, and justified, by his performances, the reputation he had gained, of being the first violinist of the age. He was peculiarly distinguished for his pure and delicate tone, the smoothness and facility of his execution, his expression, and the vocal character of his style. As a composer, he was first distinguished by his concertos, quartets, and other instrumental pieces; but he afterwards turned his attention to dramatic, and, more recently, to sacred music. By his operas of *Faust*, *Jessonda*, and *Zemire and Azor*, he has raised himself to the highest rank among the composers for the theatre; and his oratorios of *The Last Judgment* and *The Crucifixion* are not surpassed, in the sublimity of many of their parts, by anything that has appeared since the days of Handel. Though the music of these pieces never descends from the solemnity which belongs

to the subjects, yet it possesses great variety of expression,—passing from the most awful and terrible effects to strains of the deepest pathos and melancholy. The words of both of these oratorios have been translated and adapted to the music, in a most judicious and masterly manner, by Mr. Edward Taylor; and their performance, in whole or in part, is now indispensable at our greatest music meetings. Spohr has resided for many years at Cassel.

JOHANN NEPOMUK HUMMEL, *maestro di capella* to the grand duke of Saxe Weimar, has composed several masses, and other pieces of sacred music, which are much esteemed. He has also written several operas, among which his *Mathilde von Guise* is the most distinguished. His fame, however, rests chiefly upon his compositions for the piano-forte, and his talents as a performer on that instrument. He is not remarkable for the originality of his ideas; but his works are marked by such clearness of design, symmetrical disposition of parts, expressive melody, and ingenious combination, that, though their details often suggest passing reminiscences of other composers, the beautiful *whole* is his own. Those among the public performers on the piano-forte who are not in the habit of playing their own music, appear to resort more frequently to the concertos and other concert-pieces of Hummel, than to those of any other composer; and his trios, for the piano-forte, violin, and violoncello, are within the reach of able amateurs, among whom they are in very general use. As a performer, he bore a considerable resemblance to John Cramer. The style of both was formed from that of Mozart;—in Hummel, by education under

that great master; in Cramer, by predilection for, and study of, his works. In each we recognised the same rapid and brilliant, yet delicate and finished, execution; the same smoothness and equality of touch, and the same grace and expression in *singing* (as it may be termed,) a melodious passage: while neither of them carried us away with that impetuous force which belongs to the style of Beethoven. A few years ago, Hummel published a great work of studies for the piano-forte, which must have cost him years of labour, and must be of infinite value to those who have resolution enough to get through it. But its ponderous bulk, and mass of contents, afford a prospect somewhat similar to that of a journey through the Arabian desert, and are sufficient to terrify any one who has not the dogged perseverance of a German student.

Hummel died on the 17th of October, 1837, in the 59th year of his age. For the last twenty years he had resided at Weimar, in the capacity of *maestro di capella* to the grand duke of Saxe Weimar, but was personally well known to the musical world, from his frequent visits to different countries. He was several times in England—the last time in 1833—when his performance excited the delight and admiration of all who were able to appreciate the beauties of his pure and classical style. He was a man of plain but agreeable manners, and an amiable disposition; and his uniform prudence and correctness of conduct have enabled him to leave his family in a state of independence.

When great composers or performers are spoken of as belonging to a certain school, it is not meant that they are imitators of any particular master, but that,

either from education under that master, or from having been prompted, by congeniality of mind, to a study of his works, they have insensibly acquired some of the chief characteristics of his style, modified by the peculiarities of their own genius. In this sense we have mentioned Hummel and Cramer, as being of the school of Mozart; and, in the same way, Ries and Moscheles may be considered as belonging to the school of Beethoven.

FERDINAND RIES was a disciple of Beethoven. He resided in England from 1813 to 1824. His compositions for the piano-forte are, in general, masterly, and full of striking effects; but many of them smell too much of the lamp, and are deficient in the attraction of graceful melody. Among the most elegant of his productions are his *Swedish Airs* for the piano-forte, with accompaniments for an orchestra, and his *Russian Airs* for the piano-forte and violoncello. In his public performances, he commanded the attention and admiration of the audience by the strength of his hand, the freedom and boldness of his execution, and his vigorous and energetic style. Since his return to Germany, he has produced one or two dramatic pieces, which do not appear to have acquired much popularity.

IGNATZ MOSCHELES, though not a disciple of Beethoven, is deeply imbued with the spirit of that great man, from a profound study of his works. Mr. Moscheles has resided in London for the last fourteen years, and has contributed to the progress of the piano-forte in this country, not only by his public performances, but by the number of excellent players whom he has formed by his instructions, both in the fashionable circles, and

among our professional musicians. In the earlier part of his career, he astonished the musical world by his unbounded powers of execution; and, having "a giant's strength," he was prompted by his youthful fire to "use it like a giant." But being also a man of strong intellect, and capable of thinking deeply on the principles of his art, he has chastened his style, by using his prodigious power of hand, and rapidity of finger, only as the means of adding to the effect of his great and original conceptions. Moscheles has always been distinguished for the volume of tone he draws from the instrument, his grand and imposing masses of harmony, and his boldness and fire. But with these qualities he now blends a great deal of the delicate softness and tender expression which so peculiarly distinguish the style of Cramer. His compositions are very numerous, and consist chiefly of concertos, sonatas, and other pieces, for his own instrument. They are full of learning, imagination, and feeling, and show how much the inventive faculty is enlarged by an extensive knowledge of the classical productions of the art. His different books of *Studies* for the piano-forte, in particular, are unrivalled in excellence and value. He has lately produced some orchestral works, the last of which, the overture to the German tragedy of *Joan of Arc*, is worthy of Beethoven himself.

SIGISMUND NEUKOMM was a disciple of Haydn, and may be considered as the representative of his school. After having gained a high reputation on the Continent, he came, for the first time, to England in 1829; and his reception has been such as to induce

him to pass a large portion of his time in this country. His greatest works, the oratorios of *Mount Sinai* and *David*, have been produced in England. *Mount Sinai*, originally composed to German words, selected by himself from the Scriptures, was afterwards adapted by him to an English version of the words, and performed for the first time at the Derby Musical Festival, in 1831. *David*, the poem of which was originally written in English, was performed at the Birmingham Festival of 1834. *Mount Sinai* is a noble specimen of the true oratorio style. The manner in which the Commandments are delivered at intervals from the holy mountain, in the tones of the ancient ecclesiastical *canto fermo*, accompanied by the sounds of the brazen instruments, is full of awful grandeur; while the more earthly strains which intervene, even those which relate to affections and feelings purely human, though graceful, sweet, and tender, are always in accordance with the solemnity of the subject. From the subject of the oratorio of *David*, the music necessarily assumes, in many places, a dramatic character; and thus, (as in the *Mount of Olives*,) there are some scenes,—such as the mutual defiance of David and Goliath, and the scene in which David appears before Saul while under the influence of the evil spirit,—which would require theatrical action to give them their full effect. The triumphal march, too, of the victorious Israelites, with its barbaric clang of warlike instruments, though excellent in itself, recalls, through associations, the sights and sounds of the theatre. The chorusses of this oratorio are models of the ecclesiastical style: they are profound and mas-

terly in their construction, and full of those great masses of harmony which impress the mind with the ideas of majesty and power.

During his residence in England, M. Neukomm has been a prolific writer in various styles. His sacred cantatas, *Miriam*, *The Prophecy of Babylon*, and *Absalom*, are remarkable for the loftiness of their style, their varied expression, and the fine adaptation of the music to the English poetry. His cantata entitled *Napoleon's Midnight Review*, is a wild and fantastic picture, of which the outline, drawn (as it were) by the voice, is filled up by the richest and most beautiful instrumental colouring that can be imagined. His English songs are very numerous, and many of them are admirable. The popularity of *The Sea* has hardly ever been surpassed. M. Neukomm is a great organist; and his last work is a collection of voluntaries for that instrument.

MEYERBEER is celebrated as the author of several operas, particularly *Il Crociato in Egitto*, one of the best and most successful pieces of the present day. Though the composer is a native of Berlin, the music of this opera is more in the Italian than the German style. His French opera of *Robert le Diable* was written for the Grand Opera of Paris, where it had an extraordinary run. It was brought out at the King's Theatre, in London, in 1832, with the utmost splendour, and with the original French performers; but it disappointed the public expectation. The music is brilliant and striking; but the stunning noise which proceeds both from the stage and the orchestra, from the beginning to the end of an excessively long piece, is quite overpowering. His last work of magnitude is also a French:

opera, *Les Huguenots*, the success of which at Paris has been equal to that of *Robert le Diable*.

FELIX MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY, (grandson of Moses Mendelssohn, the celebrated Jewish philosopher,) though a young man, has already taken his place among the greatest musicians of the age. Before he was fourteen he had produced several works of surprising genius, particularly an opera, *The Wedding of Camacho*, which was brought out with great success at Berlin. He has been several times in England, where he first became known from several of his instrumental compositions having been performed by the Philharmonic Society. His beautiful and imaginative overture to *The Midsummer Night's Dream* has become a stock piece at our concerts. Another piece, in the form of an overture, called *The Isles of Fingal*, suggested by a visit to the Western Islands of Scotland, and written under the impressions produced by the grand phenomena of nature in those wild regions, is a fine specimen of the descriptive powers of music; but its difficulty and peculiarity of style have prevented it from being so popular as it will one day become. Mendelssohn has latterly turned his attention to sacred music, and has composed many pieces for the church which are in the highest estimation. His last (and greatest work, the oratorio of *St. Paul*, after having been received with the utmost admiration in Germany, was performed, under his own direction, at the Birmingham Festival of 1837, when its reception by the English public was equally enthusiastic. It is a work of the highest order, full of grandeur and beauty, and uniting the chaste simplicity of the old ecclesiastical writers with the

graces of modern melody and the richness and variety of modern instrumentation. As an organist and performer on the piano-forte, Mendelssohn ranks among the greatest masters of the day.

Among the most eminent German masters of the present age must also be mentioned F. SCHNEIDER, whose oratorio of *The Deluge*, clothed in an English dress by Mr. Edward Taylor with his usual skill and judgment, has formed a prominent feature at several of our recent festivals. It is a great and beautiful work, more in the style of Haydn than of the more modern school.

The German school of the present day, though superior to any other, is by no means faultless. No other country can boast of such a constellation of great names as those which have been mentioned; but, among the numerous and able composers by whom the churches, theatres, and concert-rooms are supplied with a large portion of their music, we still find a predilection for loaded and complicated harmony, a deficiency of flowing and simple melody, and that love of the obscure and mystical which seems to characterize German genius in literature as well as art. Weber, in the satirical work already noticed, *The Life of a Composer*, ironically points out the beauties of the modern German school. "Do you imagine," he says, "that, in these enlightened times, when all rules are set at nought, and all difficulties cleared at a bound, a composer will, out of compliment to you, cramp his divine, gigantic, and high-soaring fancies? Thank heaven, we have nothing to do now with regularity, clearness, keeping, and truth of expression; all these things are

left to such old-fashioned masters as Gluck, Handel, and Mozart. No!—Attend to the materials of the newest symphony which I have received from Vienna, and which may serve as a recipe for this kind of composition. First, a slow movement, full of short, broken ideas, no one of which has the slightest connexion with another; every ten minutes or so, a few striking chords; then a muffled rumbling on the kettle-drums, and a mysterious passage or two for the violas, all worked up with a due proportion of stops and pauses. Then comes a raging movement, in managing which, the principal consideration is, to avoid following up any particular idea, thus leaving the more for the hearer to make out himself. Sudden transitions, too, from one key to another, should by no means be omitted; nor need this put you out of the way. To run once through the semitones, and drop into that key which is most convenient, is sufficient, and you have a modulation off-hand. The great point is to avoid everything that looks like a conformity to rule—rules are made for every-day people, and only cramp the freedom of genius.” If a stream, however shallow, is made turbid, it is impossible to see its bottom; and it is thus that these German composers render themselves incomprehensible in order to appear profound. The faults of a school are more easily copied than its beauties. There is plenty of this sort of profundity among our own youthful aspirants to fame; and an overture to a melo-drama, in one of our theatres, is often as full of mystery as Weber’s pattern symphony from Vienna.

CHAPTER XX.

MUSIC IN ITALY DURING THE PRESENT CENTURY.—ZINGARELLI.—
MAYER.—PAER.—SPONTINI.—FIORAVANTI.—MOSCA.—ROSSINI.—
PRESENT ITALIAN SCHOOL.

THE reputation of the Italian school, at the beginning of this century, was supported by several excellent composers, who filled up the interval between Cimarosa and Rossini.

The oldest of these is NICOLO ZINGARELLI, whose numerous works were produced between the years 1780 and 1810. None of his operas are now heard in Italy, where indeed, all dramatic music is forgotten, except the ephemeral productions of the day. His most celebrated opera, *Romeo e Giulietta*, is still performed in Germany and France, and was rendered very popular in this country by Madame Pasta's beautiful personation of the part of Romeo, and her singing of the air "Ombra adorata." Zingarelli is the last of the Italian composers for the church. His oratorio *La Distruzione di Gierusalemme*, composed in 1809, is a noble work, written in the classical style of the old ecclesiastical school.

SIMON MAYER, though a German by birth, may be classed among the Italian composers of this period, as he has resided chiefly in Italy, and composed for the theatres of that country. He has been, for more than thirty years, *maestro di capella* at Bergamo. His dramatic pieces are very numerous. Those which have

obtained the most extensive popularity, are *Il Fanatico per la Musica*, *Lodoiska*, *La Ginerra di Scozia*, *La Rosa bianca e la Rosa rossa*, and *Medea in Corinto*. In the last of these pieces, Madame Pasta has achieved her greatest triumph as a tragic actress.

FERDINAND PAER is a native of Parma. Among his numerous Italian operas, the most celebrated are *Agnese*, *La Griselda*, *Camilla*, *Sargino*, and *I Fuorusciti*. All of these have been performed in England. *Agnese*, in particular, which is founded on Mrs. Opie's tale of *The Father and Daughter*, was rendered very popular by the powerful and affecting performance of Ambrogetti in the character of the Father. The part has since been performed by Tamburini, with equal beauty, but in a different style; his picture of madness being less appalling than that of Ambrogetti, but more melancholy and touching.

There is much resemblance between Paer's style and that of Mayer. Their melody is Italian, strengthened by German modulation and accompaniment. In the music of both there is much grace and elegance; it is always judiciously adapted to the character of the scene and the expression of the words; and it shows a consummate knowledge of orchestral effect. It has few traits, however, of that divine simplicity by which Mozart and Cimarosa work such miracles; and the success of their most popular pieces has been owing more to the tragic powers of certain performers, than to anything very striking in the music. They have great talent, but not high genius.

GASPARO SPONTINI, after acquiring considerable reputation in Italy, went to Paris in 1804, and composed

for the French stage his celebrated operas of *La Vestale*, *Fernand Cortez*, and *Olimpia*. He now resides at Berlin, in the situation of *maestro di capella* to the King of Prussia.

FIORAVANTI and MOSCA are the composers of several lively comic operas, once very popular, and still resorted to by Italian *buffo* singers, for the purpose of enlivening our concerts. The most remarkable of these are, *I Virtuosi ambulanti* and *Le Cantatrici villane* of Fioravanti, and *I Pretendenti delusi* of Mosca. Besides these, there were a number of composers,—SARTI, GENERALI, PAVESI, GUGLIELMI, PORTOGALLO, and others,—whose works were popular between the beginning of the century and the appearance of Rossini.

Though this distinguished composer is still alive, and, indeed, has not passed

Il mezzo del cammin di nostra vita,

yet his name already belongs to musical history. His brilliant career seems to have long since closed; a new generation of musicians has succeeded him in his own country; and his works are now looked back to as belonging to a period that is past. It is more than ten years since his biography was made the subject of a considerable volume*, which contains almost all that can be said about him; his musical history since that time being almost a blank.

GIOACCHINO ROSSINI was born in 1792, at Pesaro, a small town in the Papal territory, situated on the Gulf of Venice. His father was a third-rate horn-player, and his mother, a woman of great beauty, was a tolerable actress and singer. This couple gained their

* *Vie de Rossini, par M. de Stendhal.* Paris, 1824.

livelihood by travelling about the country and performing in the different provincial companies,—the wife singing on the stage, and the husband playing in the orchestra.

When he was seven years old, Rossini's parents removed to Bologna, where he began his musical studies. He was soon able to gain a trifle by singing in the churches, and gradually acquired the art of accompaniment and the rules of counterpoint. In 1807, at the age of fifteen, he received some lessons in music from the celebrated professor in the academy of Bologna, Padre Mattei; but these were few, and his volatile disposition made him inattentive to the instructions of his learned preceptor*. His first essay in vocal music was a cantata called *Il pianto d'Armonia*, which he produced in 1808; and he was immediately afterwards chosen director of the Academy of the *Concordi*, a musical society in Bologna.

In 1810 and 1811 Rossini composed for the theatres of Bologna and Venice, two or three dramatic pieces, which are forgotten as juvenile productions. In 1812, *L'Inganno Felice*, which may be placed at the head of the list of his works, was performed at Venice. This little opera laid the foundation of his fame, which, in the following year, rose at once to its height on the appearance of *Tancredi*. The susceptible Venetians were charmed with a music so different from anything they had heard,—with its freshness and vivacity, and its noble and heroic tone, so well suited to the subject of the piece—with the graceful and beautiful airs, and the brilliant, but simple accompaniments. It was re-

* This was told a friend of ours by the Padre Mattei himself.

ceived with tumultuous pleasure, and the next day nothing was to be heard in Venice but the airs in *Tancredi*. From the noble to the gondolier, everybody was singing snatches of "Di tanti palpiti;" and in the very courts of justice the proceedings were interrupted by the audience humming "Ti rivedrò." The amateurs said in their joy, that Cimarosa was come back to the world. This charming opera, the first fruits of the author's genius, deserved this enthusiastic reception. It has passed through as severe an ordeal as ever has been undergone by any work of genius. Year after year it has been performed, times innumerable, in every part of Europe, and by singers of every grade; its airs have been sung unremittingly at every concert and in every musical circle, screamed by boarding-school misses, and ground in barrel-organs about the streets; hammered by learners on the piano-forte in the shape of *pot-pourris* and lessons, and danced to at balls as quadrilles; and yet it has never palled on the taste, nor ceased to afford pleasure. And now, when this spring-tide of popularity has necessarily ebbed, and *Tancredi* has given place to greater novelties, it stands even higher in the cool and settled opinion of the musical world than it did when it engrossed the public attention.

After *Tancredi*, Rossini produced, with great rapidity *L'Italiana in Algeri*, *La Pietra di Paragone*, *Demetrio e Polibio*, and *Il Turco in Italia*. These pieces were very favourably received in Italy, and supported the reputation of the young composer; but they never became very generally popular. They contain, nevertheless, some of Rossini's most beautiful airs; among

which are the fine tenor song, "Languir per una bella," in *L'Italiana in Algeri*; "Eo pietosa," in the *Pietra del Paragone*; the duet, "Questo cor," in *Demetrio e Polibio*; and the duet, "D'un bel uso di Turchia," in *Il Turco*. In this last piece, too, as well as in *L'Italiana in Algeri*, there are several concerted pieces and finales, full of gaiety and comie effect. Rossini's next opera, *L'Aureliano in Palmira*, was composed for the theatre of Milan, in 1814, and had great success at first; but, like those we have just mentioned, never became generally popular. The celebrated Velluti performed the principal character. This singer, whom Rossini had not previously heard, covered his airs with such a profusion of ornaments that the composer exclaimed, "*Non conosco più la mia musica*," "I don't know my own music." It was this circumstance, it is said, which suggested to Rossini the idea of writing his airs with their embellishments, so as to prevent them from being disfigured by the presumption and bad taste of the singers; but, however richly he himself ornamented his airs, this has not prevented the Davids, and Rubinis, the Grisis, and Malibrans, from loading the very embellishments themselves with additional *fiorituri*.

In 1815, Rossini was appointed director of the music of the theatre of San Carlo, at Naples, under an engagement to compose two new operas every year, and arrange the music of all the operas brought out there; for which he was to receive twelve thousand francs (five hundred pounds) a year. The first opera which he composed for Naples was *Elisabetta Regina d'Inghilterra*, which had great success. The part of Elizabeth was performed by Signora Colbrand, a Spaniard, one of the

greatest actresses and singers of the age, who was then in the highest favour at Naples. The noble and imposing style of her beauty, set off by an accurate costume of the sixteenth century, which was obtained for her from England, made her a perfect representative of the part; and her performance of it appears to have been eminently intellectual. The description of it, given by Rossini's biographer, affords a lesson to tragedians in the performance of similar parts. "There was nothing theatrical in it," he says; "no gestures—no conventional tragic attitudes or movements. The queen's immense power, the consequences which a single word of her mouth might bring forth, were read in the beautiful, but sometimes terrible Spanish eyes of the actress. Her look, her deportment, her speech, made it impossible not to feel that this superb woman had, for twenty years, been an absolute queen. It was this *oldness* of the habits contracted by supreme power, this perfect freedom from any doubt as to the instant obedience which would be paid to the slightest of her wishes, that formed the principal feature in the performance of this great actress. The few movements which interrupted her habitual tranquillity, seemed forced from her by the violence of her own contending passions, but never from any desire of making herself obeyed. Our greatest tragedians, even Talma himself, make use of violent and imperious gestures in the parts of tyrants. Perhaps this kind of tragic blustering is a sacrifice to the bad taste of the audience; but, however much it may be applauded, it is not the less absurd. No man is so sparing of his gestures as an absolute king. They are

of no use to him, as he is accustomed to see his slightest signs followed by instant obedience to his will."

Rossini's engagement at Naples subsisted for seven years, during which he produced a number of operas at the theatre of San Carlo. Signora Colbrand continued, during all that period to be the *prima donna* of that theatre, and to perform the principal characters in his pieces, notwithstanding the decay of her vocal powers, and her consequent decline in the favour of the Neapolitans. During her previous brilliant career she had gained a large fortune; and Rossini, enamoured either of her personal charms, or of "*les beaux yeux de sa cassette*," not only was quite satisfied with her false intonation in singing his music, but married her before he finally quitted Naples.

Not being precluded by his duties at Naples from composing pieces for other places, Rossini brought out at Rome, during the carnival of 1816, *Torvaldo e Dorliska*, and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. The first of these had little success, and was immediately forgotten; the other made an impression equal to that produced by *Tancredi*.

The drama at Rome is kept under a rigid censorship; and, at this time, several pieces, submitted by the manager of the theatre, had been prohibited on account of certain allusions. The manager, annoyed at these disappointments, proposed the drama of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, the music of which had been already composed by Paesiello; and it was accepted. Rossini, though never troubled with diffidence, felt this an embarrassing situation, and wrote to the veteran musician, telling him

how the matter stood. The old *maestro*, who seems not to have been altogether without vanity, wrote in reply, that he was delighted with the choice made by the Roman police. Rossini prefixed a modest preface to the book of the words; showed Paesiello's letter to all the *dilettanti* in Rome; and set to work upon the opera, which he finished in thirteen days. It was performed on the 26th of December, 1816, the first day of the carnival.

This opera experienced a singular fortune. The first night the audience would scarcely hear it to an end; the second it was applauded to the skies. Unfavourable comparisons were made with some favourite *morceaux* in Paesiello's opera, and some evident faults were laid hold of. The air sung by *Count Almariva* under his mistress's window wanted the exquisite grace and simplicity of Paesiello's melody; and *Rosina's* first song, the famous "Una voce poco fà," appeared quite out of character, making her appear in the light of a bold-faced vixen, instead of a modest and simple girl, whom love renders cunning and ready-witted. The beginning of the second act, too, was found tiresome. Notwithstanding these objections, however, (and they are not without foundation), the public, on a second hearing, did justice to the beauties of the piece, and were delighted with its brilliancy, gaiety, and admirable dramatic effect. Like *Tancredi*, it immediately flew over Europe, and was everywhere received with the same enthusiasm.

Otello was composed for the theatre of Naples. The drama was clumsily manufactured from Shakspeare's tragedy by the Marquis Berio, a *dilettante* poet of that city; and it is said that Rossini, who knew something

of the original play, had taste enough to see how much it was mangled, and reluctantly undertook the task of writing the music of this Italian *rifacimento*. It was, however, extremely successful, and has been one of the most popular of Rossini's works. The most blundering dramatic treatment of so fine a subject could not deprive it altogether of its striking features; and the music, though very unequal, contains great beauties. The opening chorus of welcome to the victorious general is full of spirit; and there is much dignity in Othello's first entrance, and his address to the senate. When Desdemona, too, first appears, the duet between her and Emilia is very graceful, and in the manner of the older Italian composers. The *finale* to the first act, which occupies a large portion of it, is the finest part of the opera. The nuptials of Desdemona with Roderigo, to whom she has been betrothed by her father, while she is already, in secret, the wife of Othello, are about to be celebrated; the assembled friends express their joyful congratulations in a chorus, the gaiety of which is contrasted with the agitation of the bride, and the perplexity of the bridegroom and father. Othello suddenly enters, and, observing what is passing, proclaims his marriage; and this disclosure produces a scene of confusion, dismay, jealousy, and rage. In the concluding scene, there are some pathetic touches:—Desdemona, in her midnight chamber, listening to the distant notes of the gondolier, and singing the simple ballad, “Assisa a piè d'un salice,”—the “Song of Willow,” which Shakspeare's Desdemona describes as being sung by her mother's maid, poor Barbara. But the music of this opera is, on the whole, too loud and boisterous, both in

the vocal parts and the accompaniments; and the hearer is stunned with incessant shouting on the stage, and the din of trumpets, trombones, and all the noisy instruments in the orchestra.

It was in *Otello* that Rossini first adopted this style of orchestral writing, which he is incorrectly said to have borrowed from the German school. But the accompaniments of Mozart (the type of that school,) are full of ingenious contrivance and endless variety of combination, while Rossini uses every sort of instrument, merely to swell the loudness of a very inartificial harmony. Mozart's singers must be strictly attentive to time, and careful to avoid even an *appoggiatura* that may interfere with the purity of his harmonies. If Rossini's singers have only lungs strong enough to make themselves heard through the noise of the orchestra, they are as free from restraint as their predecessors were a century ago. Hence Italian singers in general cannot bear, and cannot sing, the music of Mozart, while they are perfectly at home in that of Rossini. This species of accompaniment, the vices of which have been aggravated by Rossini's successors, has greatly injured the Italian style of singing. It has lost much of the sweetness and smoothness for which it has so long been pre-eminent. Forced to contend incessantly with such a mass of sound, the females are compelled to scream, and the males to shout; and the incorrect and slovenly harmony which they are accustomed to hear from the orchestra renders them by no means fastidious as to the purity of their roulades and embellishments. Rossini's scores are full of gross violations of the most established laws of harmony,

which some people defend, by saying that they are not perceptible to the ear. But take one of these passages, and play it on the piano-forte, and its deformity will at once be apparent, though, in the theatre, the false harmony may be covered by the confusion of many loud instruments*. Is such harmony justifiable, because it is tolerated only when the ear is unable to discover of what it consists? Had such things been ever admitted by Haydn or Mozart, they would have been perceived at once through the pellucid clearness of the score; but are impurities less offensive in themselves, because the stream which contains them is turbid?

Rossini's new opera, *La Cenerentola*, was first performed at Rome in 1817. It contains some excellent passages, particularly the famous duet, "Un segreto d'importanza," and the brilliant air, "Non più mesta," accompanied by the chorus, which forms the finale; but, as a whole, it does not hold a high place among the author's works. In the same year, *La Gazza Ladra* was produced at Milan, and received with the most extravagant demonstrations of pleasure. A strong impression was made by the overture, the military cheerfulness of which is so admirable a preparation for the young soldier's joyful return to his family. The deep interest

* In this opera of *Otello*, the trio "*Ah, vieni*," contains within the compass of four bars, and in the vocal parts, a series of *five perfect fifths in succession*, besides *three discords of the seventh resolved upwards*; and the passage is twice repeated. This jargon passes unnoticed, because the voices are drowned by the orchestra. The chorus, "*Qual orror*," contains combinations equally offensive, but concealed in the same manner.

of the story adds greatly to the attraction of this piece; and the music, though very unequal, contains some of the composer's happiest efforts. He has never written anything more beautiful than the air, "Di piacer mi balza il cor," so expressive of tender and innocent joy. The trio, "Nume benefico," is full of dramatic truth and enhances the effect of the finest situation in the drama. In other parts of the opera, however, there is a strange disregard of musical propriety; as, in the introduction of a waltz movement into the proceedings of the court of justice. The interest centres in the parts of *Ninetta* and her father; and, when these are well performed, the piece will always please.

Mosè in Egitto was brought out at Naples in 1818. In this piece Rossini has attained an elevation of style which is not to be found in any of his other productions. The chorusses are grand and majestic. The sublime prayer of the Hebrews, when preparing to cross the Red Sea, was an after-thought. Notwithstanding the transports with which the opera, in general, was received, the attempt of the machinist to represent this scene never failed to excite the risibility of the audience. This continued during the first season.

"The following season," says M. Stendhal, "this opera was resumed with the same enthusiastic admiration of the first act, and the same bursts of laughter at the passage of the Red Sea. The following day, one of my friends called about noon on Rossini, who, as usual, was lounging in bed with a dozen of his friends about him; when, to the great amusement of everybody, in rushed the poet Tottola, (the author of the drama,) who, without noticing any one, exclaimed, 'Maestro! I have

saved the third act!' 'Well what have you done, my good friend?' replied Rossini, mimicking the half-burlesque, half-pedantic manner of the poor son of the muses. 'Depend upon it they will laugh at us as usual.' 'But I have made a prayer for the Hebrews, before the passage of the Red Sea,' said the poet, pulling a bundle of papers out of his pocket, and giving them to Rossini, who immediately began to decypher the scrawl. While he is reading, the poet salutes the company all round, whispering every moment in the composer's ear, 'Maestro, I did it in an hour.' 'What! in an hour!' exclaimed Rossini.—'Well, if it has taken you an hour to write this prayer, I engage to write the music in a quarter of the time: here, give me a pen and ink.' At these words, Rossini jumped out of bed, seated himself at table *en chemise*, and in eight or ten minutes composed this sublime movement, without any piano, and without minding the chatting of his friends. 'There,' said Rossini, 'there is your music;—away about your business.' The poet was off like lightning; and Rossini jumped into bed, and joined in the general laugh at his parting look of amazement.

"The following evening I did not fail to repair in good time to San Carlo. The first act was received with the same transports as before; but when they came to the famous passage of the Red Sea, the audience showed the usual disposition to risibility. This, however, was repressed the moment *Moses* began the new and sublime air, 'Dal tuo stellato soglio.' This is the prayer which all the people repeat after Moses in chorus. Surprised at this novelty, the pit was all attention. This beautiful chorus is in the minor key; *Aaron* takes it up, and the

people continue it. Last of all, *Elcia* addresses the same vows to heaven, and the people answer. At this moment they all throw themselves on their knees, and repeat the same prayer with enthusiasm; the prodigy is wrought; the sea opens, to present a passage to the people. The last part of the movement is in the major key. It would be difficult to give an idea of the thunder of applause which resounded from every part of the theatre. The spectators leaned over the boxes to applaud, exclaiming, 'Bello! bello! O che bello!' Never did I behold such an excitement, which was rendered still more striking by its contrast with the previous merry mood of the audience."

Mosè in Egitto was successfully brought out in London, under the title of *Pietro L'Eremita*, with the alterations necessary to change the subject to the Egyptian captivity of Peter the Hermit, the famous originator of the crusades.

In the spring of 1819, *Odoardo e Christina* was produced at Venice. It was at first much applauded; but it was soon discovered that a great part of the music was taken from an opera which had previously been performed at Naples without much success. The manager complained bitterly to Rossini of this deception, but was only laughed at by the composer.

La Donna del Lago was performed at Naples in the same year. Notwithstanding its great merit, and subsequent popularity, its reception at first was anything but flattering. Signora Colbrand was by this time completely out of favour, and the public were impatient at her being forced upon them against their inclination. They watched for an opportunity to hiss, but for some

time none occurred. But at length, the celebrated Nozzari, who personated *Roderick Dhu*, having to enter from the back of the stage at a great distance from the orchestra, unfortunately pitched his first note (which is a magnificent burst,) somewhat too low; and this mistake was visited by a general yell of disapprobation. "Nothing," says Stendhal, "can convey an adequate idea of the fury of a Neapolitan public, when either offended by a false note, or furnished with some good pretext for satisfying an old grudge." Nozzari's air was followed by the appearance of a number of bards, who came to animate the Scottish troops to battle by the sound of their harps. The chorus of bards is accompanied by a splendid military march. This representation took place on a gala day; and the court was not present to put a restraint on the audience. There were a number of young officers in the pit, who had been drinking the king's health, and were in boisterous spirits. One of these gentlemen, at the first sound of the trumpets, began to imitate with his cane the gallop of a horse; and in an instant the pit was filled with the clatter of five hundred similar imitations. The piece was finished in the midst of confusion; and Rossini set off the same night for Milan. On the road, and at Milan, he told everybody that the *Donna del Lago* had been applauded to the skies, and was not a little surprised to find that, after all, he had been telling the truth. On the second night, some improvements were made in the performance; and the public, who began to be ashamed of the manner in which they had treated so beautiful a work, received it with rapturous applause.

Maometto Secondo was brought out at Naples in 1820,

and failed. Three years afterwards it was again produced at Venice, Rossini having undertaken to re-compose the second act. The public, by no means satisfied that an opera, previously unsuccessful, had been palmed upon them, and still less so when they found that he had made only a few trifling alterations in it, gave vent to their feelings with a violence truly Italian, and treated both the composer and singers with great indignity. In 1826, however, a French version of the piece, under the title of *Le Siège de Corinthe*, was successfully produced at Paris; and in this form, but with Italian words, and by Italian singers, it has been repeatedly performed, both at Paris and London, under the title of *L'Assedio di Corinto*. Though, upon the whole, an inferior work, yet it possesses considerable merit.

Zelmira, first performed at Naples in 1822, contains some of Rossini's finest music; and its comparative want of success can be ascribed only to the feebleness and absurdity of the drama. A dramatic poet in Italy, is generally a miserable appendage to a theatre; an object of contumely and ridicule. Of this class seems to have been the author of the *libretto* of *Zelmira*—the worthy Signor Tottola, whom we had occasion to mention a little while ago. If the *libretto* of a modern Italian opera is at all tolerable, it is when the poet has luckily stumbled upon some subject, the capabilities of which for dramatic effect he has not been able to destroy. The Neapolitans, moreover, were completely weary of Signora Colbrand, and not disposed to receive anything with favour in which she bore a part.

The last opera composed by Rossini before he left Italy, (to which he has never returned,) was *Semiramide*,

first produced at Venice in 1823. This is a great but very unequal work. Some of the chorusses and concerted pieces are magnificent, and there is much grandeur in the whole of the music given to the part of Semiramis,—a part which, when performed by a singer who is at the same time a great tragic actress, such as Madame Pasta, always makes a strong impression on the audience. But the music is full of reminiscences, not only of Rossini himself, but of Mozart and other composers; and the *pseudo*-German style of accompaniment is carried to such an excess, that the ear is absolutely stunned by the unremitting noise of the orchestra.

Rossini arrived in London in the beginning of the opera season of 1824, in consequence of an engagement at the King's Theatre, by which he was to be composer and director of the music, to superintend the performance of his own operas, and to produce a new one for the theatre. Madame Colbrand Rossini (whom he had lately married) was also engaged as *prima donna*. The theatre opened with *Zelmira*, but it failed, and Madame Colbrand was so coldly received, that she did not re-appear. *Semiramide* was afterwards brought out, with Madame Pasta as the Assyrian queen. The season was attended with enormous loss; and Rossini left England without having fulfilled his engagement to compose an opera. His residence in London, however, was a very profitable one to himself. He was just the kind of man to be the fashionable lion of the day. His music was universally popular; he was himself a first-rate comic singer; and his manners and address were calculated to gain the favour of the gay and the courtly. The aristocracy, from royalty downwards, were profuse in

their invitations and attentions; and he left England loaded with solid proofs of their liberality. His regular fee for attending a private musical party was fifty guineas, but those who invited him seldom contented themselves with giving him that sum. As if this were not enough, two subscription concerts were set on foot for him, to take place at Almaack's rooms; the price of a ticket admission to both to be three guineas, and none to be admitted except such as were approved of by *lady patronesses*, appointed to guard the assembly from the approach even of that portion of the *profanum vulgus* who were able and willing to give three guineas for a couple of concerts! This, however, was too much, even for the extravagance of our *beau-monde*; and the price of admission was reduced to a guinea for each concert. The concerts were attended by a crowd of fashionables, who had the gratification of hearing Rossini's most hackneyed songs, sung by the vocalists whom they heard every day, and accompanied by a pitiful band of twenty performers. They, however, could boast of having heard two or three comic songs and duets, sung by the great *maestro* himself. What a contrast to the treatment experienced, two years afterwards, by the modest and high-souled Weber!

The extravagance of Rossini's admirers in England had the natural effect of exciting a feeling of hostility towards him; he was violently attacked, and his character, manners, and habits, grossly misrepresented in different journals and other publications. Among other stories told to his prejudice, there was one which was so often repeated, and gained such currency, that it is proper to mention it, for the purpose of contradiction.

It was said, that Rossini, having been invited to a musical party given by the king, at Brighton, conducted himself with a degree of arrogance which disgusted his majesty; and that, in particular, on being requested to sing towards the close of the entertainment, he refused very cavalierly, telling the king, who had politely made the request, that they had had enough of singing for one evening. This is wholly untrue. Rossini, on making his appearance, was received with great courtesy by the king, who told him that he should hear some music by a foreign composer who was much esteemed in England; and, on a signal from his majesty, his unrivalled band of wind instruments played the overture to *La Gazza Ladra*. Rossini received this graceful compliment in the manner which became him, and expressed himself charmed with the performance of his music. In the course of the evening he sang two songs which required much exertion, in a manner which delighted his audience; but, when the king desired to hear him in a third song, he excused himself by saying that his voice was so much exhausted by his last effort, that he should be found incapable of giving further gratification to such judges as those before whom he had the honour of performing;—an excuse, which, instead of giving offence to his royal host, was readily and graciously received. Rossini had too much good-sense, and had mingled too much with the world, to be ignorant of his precise position in society, or to be guilty of any solecisms in good manners. Every account of him which is entitled to credit, concurs in representing his deportment as uniformly correct, and his manners as gentlemanlike and agreeable: and,

if he was absurdly courted and extravagantly rewarded, it is hardly fair to lay to his charge the folly of a frivolous crowd who endeavoured to gain fashion and *éclat* by exhibiting themselves as his admirers and patrons.

Since that time Rossini has resided chiefly at Paris. He was for some years director of the Italian opera, which, it is said, did not prosper under his management. At the time of the coronation of Charles the Tenth, he composed the music of a slight *pièce de circonstance*, called *Il Viaggio de Rheims*; and afterwards produced a French opera, called *Le Comte Ory*, chiefly taken from the above piece. About nine years ago he brought out his admirable French opera, *Guillaume Tell*, the success of which, it might have been imagined, would have excited him to further exertion. But he appears, ever since that time, to have lived in a state of total inactivity.

The present Italian composers are mere imitators of Rossini, and are much more successful in copying his defects than his beauties. They are, like him, full of mannerism; with this difference, that his manner was *his own*, while theirs is *his*. They occasionally produce pretty melodies, a faculty possessed, to some extent, by every Italian composer, however low his grade; but in general their airs are strings of common-place passages, borrowed chiefly from Rossini, and employed without regard to the sentiment and expression required by the scene. Their concerted pieces are clumsy and inartificial; and their loud and boisterous accompaniments show a total ignorance of orchestral composition. This general description applies to them all. PACINI,

MERCADANTE, BELLINI, and DONIZETTI are all alike—“*fortem Gyan, fortemque Cloanthum,*”—and have not a single distinctive feature.

The Italian vocal performers retain their pre-eminence, and form a constellation of artists who have perhaps never been surpassed in genius and physical power. Among these was Madame MALIBRAN,* and there are now Signora GRISI, and Signors RUBINI, TAMBURINI, and LABLACHE. But the style even of these great vocalists is vitiated by the music they are accustomed to sing. As they cannot delight and affect their hearers by singing airs destitute of beauty and expression, they resolve to astonish by displays of voice and execution: and they find this expedient succeed in gaining applause; for the vulgar, great as well as small, are fond of being astonished. Sound musical taste, however, is gaining ground everywhere but in Italy; and the composers and singers of that country, unless they follow the progress of improvement, will, in all probability, soon find no market for their talents beyond the Alps.

Were it not for the name of PAGANINI, Italy could hardly be said to possess, at present, any instrumental music. He, indeed, is himself a host. Notwithstanding the tricks, caprices, and eccentricities in which he indulges, he is certainly, in power of execution, richness of fancy, grace and beauty of style, and impassioned expression, the greatest violinist of the age. The impression made in England by his wonderful and most

* The lamented death of this lady, at the termination of the Manchester Festival in 1836, took place since the first edition of this work was published.

beautiful performances can never be effaced from the memory of those who heard him. Though he has been listened to, in all parts of Europe, with an enthusiasm which never suffered any abatement, yet it is a considerable time since he appeared in public. We lament to learn that the bad state of his health is the cause of his silence.

CHAPTER XXI.

MUSIC IN FRANCE DURING THE LAST AND PRESENT CENTURIES.—
 RAMEAU.—GRETRY.—GLUCK.—PICCINI.—CHERUBINI.—PRESENT
 STATE OF MUSIC IN FRANCE.

THE French have now an excellent school of music, but it is of very modern date. Previous to the beginning of the last century, LULLI is almost the only name that deserves to be recorded in French musical history; and when, besides him, we mention COUPERIN and MARCHAND, who were great organists, and LECLAIR, a distinguished performer on the violin, we include almost every eminent name that preceded the celebrated Rameau.

JEAN PHILIPPE RAMEAU was born in 1683; and, though he became a very voluminous and popular dramatic composer, it is a remarkable circumstance that he was fifty years of age when he produced his first opera. In his younger days, his musical pursuits were directed chiefly to the theory of the art; and the system contained in his *Traité de l'Harmonie*, published in 1722, was almost universally followed during the last century. This system was more fully developed in another work, entitled *Démonstration du Principe de l'Harmonie*, published by him in 1750; and it was afterwards exhibited in a clearer and more philosophical form by the celebrated D'Alembert, in his *Elémens de Musique*, published in 1752. The fallacy of this system, and its worse than inutility in its application

to practice, are now so generally recognised, that any account of it has become unnecessary.

Rameau's first opera, *Hippolite et Aricie*, which appeared in 1733, made a great impression on the public, and caused a violent feud between the partisans of Lulli and those of Rameau. His music was much more learned, and rich in harmony, than that of his predecessor; but his airs were in a style which could be tolerated only by a French ear of those days. They, however, remained unrivalled in public favour for more than forty years.

Soon after Rameau had overcome the partisans of Lulli, he had to encounter an attempt to introduce Italian music. In 1752 an Italian company appeared at Paris, and performed Pergolesi's *Serva Padrona* in the Opera-house. This delicious burletta made many proselytes to Italian music; and another feud, more violent than the former, commenced. The *litterati* engaged in the warfare; numerous pamphlets were written on both sides, among which was Rousseau's masterly *Lettre sur la Musique Française*, in which he espoused, with great eloquence and force, the cause of the Italian school. By way of answer, Rousseau was burnt in effigy at the Opera-house door. After a violent struggle, which lasted two years, the Italian performers were driven from Paris; an event triumphantly recorded in the periodical publications of the day.

In 1753, the appearance of Rousseau's *Devin du Village*, the airs of which are in a pleasing ballad style, began to give the French a taste for unaffected and flowing melody. DUNI (who has been already mentioned as the rival of Pergolesi,) was the first Italian

composer who was successful in France. In 1758 he began to produce a series of French comic operas, which became popular. PHILIDOR and MONSIGNY composed a number of comic operas, in the Italian style, which still further influenced the national taste; and the affections of the French were at last weaned from Rameau by the operas of GRETRY.

This pleasing composer was born at Liege in 1741. After receiving the best musical education which that place afforded, he went, at the age of eighteen, to Rome, where he pursued his studies with great ardour for eight years. He then went to Paris, and, in 1768, produced his first opera, *Le Huron*, founded on Voltaire's tale of that name, and written by Marmontel. It was received with great applause; and his second piece, *Lucile*, was still more successful. His popularity soon became unbounded; and he produced about thirty comic operas, which, for a time, excluded almost all other music from the French theatres. Two of them, *Zemire et Azor*, and *Richard Cœur de Lion*, were adapted to the English stage, and rendered Grétry's name popular in this country. At the time of the Revolution, he entered warmly into the spirit of the time, and composed several of those airs which contributed so much to heighten the excitement of the people. He was, however, a man of an amiable and irreproachable character, and was generally beloved and respected. He died in 1813.

The airs in Grétry's operas are simple, elegant, expressive, and remarkable for the care with which the music is adapted to the meaning and accent of the poetry. To this department of his art he paid the

utmost attention, and the observations upon it in his *Essais sur la Musique** deserve the consideration of every vocal composer. His orchestral accompaniments are thin, but effective; and his best operas may still be listened to with much pleasure. One of them, in particular, *La Caravane du Caire*, continues to be a stock-piece at the French opera.

In 1774, GLUCK arrived in Paris, recommended to the young queen by her brother, the Emperor Joseph. He began his career in France with *Orphée*, a translation of his Italian opera of *Orfeo*; and this was followed by *Iphigenie en Aulide*, *Alceste*, and *Armide*. These pieces were rapturously received by the Parisians, on account of their forcible, energetic, and dramatic character. They were applauded, too, by the partisans of the French school, as being more in the French than the Italian style. The cry was, that Gluck had revived the music of the ancient Greeks, and was the only musician in Europe who knew how to express the passions; and the journals were filled with his praises, and with violent attacks on the Italian music, when Piccini arrived in 1776.

The partisans of the Italian school immediately rallied round Piccini. Marmontel, who, in consequence of his predilection for the Italian style, had warmly supported Grétry, for whom he had written several pieces, now determined to do a similar service to Piccini. He resolved to take Quinault's beautiful operas, clear them of episodes and superfluous details, and modernize their

* This work (published at Paris in 1797), though somewhat disfigured by vanity and egotism, contains a great deal of valuable and interesting matter. The author's autobiography is delightful.

form by the addition of airs, duets, monologues in accompanied recitative, and chorusses, and then get them set to music by Piccini. In this manner he re-composed the opera of *Roland*, and set Piccini to work upon it. The Italian composer did not know a word of French; and Marmontel, in his ardour, undertook the task of teaching him. The account he gives of their course of study is interesting and instructive. "Imagine," says Marmontel, in his *Memoirs*, "the trouble I had, in giving these lessons. Line by line, word by word, I had everything to explain; and when he had laid hold of the meaning of a passage, I recited it to him, marking the accent, the prosody, and the cadence of the verses. He listened cagerly; and I had the satisfaction to see that what he heard was carefully noted down. His delicate ear seized so readily the accent of the language and the measure of the poetry, that, in his music, he never mistook them. It was an inexpressible pleasure to me to see him practise, before my eyes, an art, of which I had, till then, no idea. His harmony was in his mind. He wrote his air with the utmost rapidity; and when he had traced its design, he filled up all the parts of the score, distributing the traits of melody and harmony just as a skilful painter would distribute, on his canvas, the colours, lights, and shadows of his picture. When all this was done, he opened his harpsichord, which he had been using as his writing-table; and I then heard an air, a duet; a chorus, completed in all its parts, with a truth of expression, an intelligence, a unity of design, a magic in the harmony which delighted both my ear and my feelings."

Roland was performed with great success, and obtained the admiration of all, except the determined partisans of Gluck. A furious war raged between the two parties. The *literati* ranged themselves on either side. The press groaned, and the journals teemed, with pamphlets and dissertations, not more remarkable for zeal and violence, than for entire ignorance of the subject. The friendly intercourse of society was limited to the adherents of the same party; and no door was opened to a visiter till it was known whether he was a *Gluckist* or a *Piccini*. It was fortunate, however, for the cause of music, that each of these eminent men had partisans sufficient to afford him effectual support; and hence the works of both were successfully performed.

In consequence of the success of *Roland*, Piccini became a favourite at court; though his court favour seems to have profited him but little. "He went regularly twice a week to Versailles," says his biographer, M. Ginguéné, "to give singing lessons to the queen, who treated him very satisfactorily. Respectful treatment, it is true, was all his salary; and, for nearly a year, it cost him, twice a week, ten or twelve francs for carriage-hire, for which he was never reimbursed. It is true, likewise, that he presented to the queen a score of *Roland*, magnificently bound, and obtained her permission to present copies to the king, the princes his brothers, and all the princesses of the family; and that the same honour was subsequently done to all his other scores, though he was never even asked how much their beautiful bindings had cost him."

During the height of the musical feud between the

partisans of Gluck and Piccini, an attempt was made by Berton, at that time director of the opera, to appease the parties by reconciling the chiefs. Accordingly (says Ginguéné) he gave a great supper, where Gluck and Piccini, after embracing each other, were placed side by side. They conversed during the evening with great cordiality. After supper, Gluck, like a true German, a little warmed by wine, began to talk very frankly, and so loud as to be heard by all the company. "The French," he said, "are a good sort of people, but they really amuse me; they want to have songs composed for them, and yet they know nothing about singing. My dear friend, you are a man celebrated throughout Europe. You think only of supporting your reputation: you compose beautiful music for them,—but what are you the better for it? Believe me, you must think here of making money, and nothing else." Piccini politely replied, that the example of M. Gluck proved that it was possible to attend to one's fame and fortune at the same time. "They parted," adds Ginguéné, "as they met, and there is no doubt that their mutual expressions of friendship were sincere. Yet the war, of which they were the cause, did not cease; and it may truly be said of them, as has been said of political leaders, that they themselves were the men who seemed least to belong to their parties."

Piccini's second opera, *Atys*, was not less favourably received than *Roland*. But in his next essay, in which he was brought into direct collision with his rival, he was not so fortunate. The director of the opera had furnished each of the composers with a poem on the

same subject, "Iphigenia in Tauris." The piece given to Gluck was full of the horrors which he could express with so much energy; Piccini's was an inferior production, and of a softer character. When they came to be performed, Piccini's music appeared slight and feeble, in consequence of the strong impression which had been made by that of Gluck. This comparative failure, however, was compensated by the triumphant success of *Didon*, the poem of which was written for Piccini by Marmontel.

The rivalry of these great musicians, and even the feud which it occasioned, were ultimately favourable to the progress of French taste. The feud passed away; while the public, from hearing the finest specimens of the German and Italian school, became more and more capable of feeling and appreciating the beauties of both. From that time to the present, an uninterrupted series of distinguished composers, both Italian and German, have devoted their talents to the French lyric theatre, and their labours have been successfully emulated by native artists. Among the foreign composers, the most distinguished are, Sacchini, Winter, Spontini, Rossini, and Meyerbeer, all of whom have already been mentioned; and CHERUBINI, to whom the French school is especially indebted for its present excellence. Though born and educated in Italy, this great musician is naturalized, by long residence, in France, where he has produced his celebrated operas of *Les Deux Journées*, *Lodoiska*, *Elisa*, and *Anacreon*, and several sublime compositions for the church; and where his exertions have contributed to the formation of one of the finest institutions for musical education in Europe. Among

the native dramatic composers, the most eminent are MEHUL, (the favourite pupil of Gluck,) BERTON, CATEL, LE SUEUR, KREUTZER, BOIELDIEU, and AUBER, all of whom have produced works worthy to vie with those of their Italian and German rivals. Boieldieu, whose death took place in 1834, has produced a greater number of popular pieces than any composer since Grétry. The most fashionable French composer of the present time is AUBER, the author of *Masaniello*, *Fra Diavolo*, and other well-known pieces.

The excellence of the French school of composition is, as yet, almost confined to dramatic music. In church music it possesses nothing but a few productions of GOSSEC, LE SUEUR, and CHERUBINI; and France does not appear to have given birth to a great organist since the days of Couperin and Marchand.

The late M. Choron gives the following account of the present state of cathedral singing in France. "The French chapel-masters understand so little of *canto fermo*, that I have seen the most experienced of them (in their own opinion) mistake the tone of the chant. And besides, writing this sort of music is not taught in France, but they practise instead, in the cathedrals, an extemporary harmony, which is called *chant sur le livre*. To give some idea of it, imagine fifteen or twenty singers of every description of voices, from the bass to the highest soprano, singing as loud as they can bawl, each according to his own fancy, without either rule or method, and making every note in the scale, both diatonic and chromatic, heard at the same time with the plain chant, which is performed by harsh and discordant voices; you will then have some idea of

what is called in France *chant sur le livre*. But what will be thought still more incredible is, that there are choral precentors and chapel-masters, who are so depraved in their taste, as to admire and encourage this horrid mockery of music in their churches." The music of the mass, too, seems to have lost almost every vestige of the old ecclesiastical gravity; it being no uncommon thing to hear the fashionable opera airs introduced into this part of the service*.

Neither is the French school distinguished for composers of instrumental music. The only name of eminence in this department, is that of ONSLOW, whose quartets and quintets are ranked, by many competent judges, immediately after those of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. The works of Handel, however, and other German and Italian ecclesiastical writers, as well as the orchestral compositions of the Germans, are now regularly studied and admirably performed. The French can boast of a multitude of great instrumental performers, particularly on the violin. The names of KREUTZER, BAILLOT, RODE, LAFONT, and DE BERIOT, attest the excellence of the French school in this respect. They are rich, too, in didactic works on music. The various treatises of CHORON, REICHA, and CATEL,

* The following paragraph is from the *Gazette Musicale de Paris*:—"Toutes les célébrités de la musique assistaient, le jour de la Toussaint, à Saint Roch, pour entendre une messe d'une composition nouvelle; l'église était pleine au point qu'on ne pouvait plus se remuer. On a remarqué un *Credo*, arrangé sur les différents motifs de nos opéras les plus en vogue.—Décidément il faudra avoir sa chaise à Saint Roch comme on a sa loge aux Italiens!"

on the science of harmony and every branch of composition, and the books of instruction for singers and performers on all instruments, drawn up under the direction of the Conservatory, are in general use, not only in France, but in every other country where music is cultivated.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE ENGLISH GLEE. — PRINCIPAL GLEE COMPOSERS. — ENGLISH
DRAMATIC MUSIC DURING THE PRESENT CENTURY.

THE *glee* may be considered as peculiar to England. Other countries may afford scattered specimens of this description of music, but it is in this country only that it has engaged the attention of the most distinguished composers. Almost every English musician of eminence has written glees; and men of great genius have devoted themselves exclusively to their production. Hence we are in possession of a body of vocal harmony, which furnishes one of the most elegant and refined of our social recreations.

The word *glee*, as indicating a particular form of musical composition, appears to have been first used in a work published by Playford, in 1667, consisting of "Dialogues, *Glees*, Ayres, and Ballads, of two, three, and four voices." Burney defines a glee, in its original sense to be, "a song of three or more parts, upon a gay or merry subject, in which all the voices begin and end together, singing the same words:" and he adds,— "when subjects of fugue or imitation occur, and the composition is more artificial than simple counterpoint, it less resembles a *glee* than a *madrigal*, which it might with more propriety be called, if the words are serious; for a *serious glee* seems a solecism, and a direct contradiction in terms: the word *glee*, in Saxon, German, and English dictionaries, ancient and modern,

implying *mirth*, *merriment*, and, in old authors, *music* itself." This definition of the glee, in its oldest form, establishes the distinction between the *cheerful glee* and the *catch*. Both are songs in three or more parts, upon gay subjects; but, in the one, the voices begin and end together, while, in the other, they take up their parts in succession, and the words generally receive some quaint or ludicrous meaning from the manner in which they are broken and caught up by the different singers. But Burney overlooks the true distinction between the *serious glee* and the *madrigal*. The madrigal was intended to be sung by the whole of a convivial party, or as many as could make any use of the music-books, which were handed round the table; and this, which Morley describes as the original mode of performing madrigals, has been continued to the present time by the Madrigal Society. When pieces were composed, in order to be sung by two, three, or four persons, for the entertainment of the rest of the company, they were called dialogues, catches, and glees, or two, three, or four-part songs. This species of vocal harmony of a single voice to each part, at first chiefly confined to subjects of a lively character, and of a simpler construction and more rhythmical melody than the madrigals, was found by degrees to be adapted to a greater range of subjects, and capable of more elaborate treatment; and hence the apparent anomaly of the *serious glee*. But a serious glee could not with propriety be called a madrigal. There is this essential distinction between them, that the one is a piece of choral harmony, while the other is for single voices. A madrigal might (though with diminished effect) be

sung by single voices ; but a glee could not be sung as a chorus. The apparent solecism in the phrase, "serious glee," is one of a thousand instances of a word coming to receive an acceptation different from its original meaning. Glee, as a musical term, means a piece for three, four, or five single voices, unaccompanied by any instrument, without reference to the subject of the words. As this species of composition was more and more cultivated, the subjects became more various ; and we have glees of a pathetic, grand, and (as in the case of Webbe's "When winds breathe soft," and Calleeott's "O snatch me swift,") even devotional character. The style of the glee, of course, depends on the subject of the words ; but it may be remarked in general, that it is a medium between the style of the church and that of the theatre ; the serious glee never being so grave as the anthem, nor the cheerful glee so light as the theatrical chorus or concerted piece. A glee may, without impropriety, be accompanied on the piano-forte, for the sake of facilitating its performance and sustaining the pitch of the voices ; but, if the accompaniment is florid, or essential to the harmony or continuity of the music, then the piece is not properly a glee (though sometimes called so) but a vocal trio, quartet, or quintet. We even find, in our operas, concerted pieces accompanied by the orchestra, called glees ; but this use of the term is quite erroneous.

Having already noticed the principal composers for the church and the theatre who also cultivated glee writing, it remains to speak of some of the most distinguished of those who have chiefly or exclusively devoted themselves to it.

About the middle, and in the latter part of, the last century, there were a number of glee composers, whose names are preserved by their beautiful and still popular compositions. Among these were ATTERBURY, the author of the charming round, "Sweet enslaver," and the glee, "Lay that sullen garland by thee;" BAILDON, author of "When gay Bacchus," and "Adieu to the village delights;" DANBY, author of "The fairest flowers," "When Sappho tuned," and "Awake, Æolian lyre;" PAXTON, author of "Go, Damon, go," "How sweet, how fresh," and "Breathe soft, ye winds;" and SPOFFORTH, author of "Hail, smiling morn," "Come, bounteous May," "Where are those hours," and "Lightly o'er the village green." To the same period belong the compositions of Dr. HARRINGTON, of Bath, among which the duet, "How sweet in the woodlands," the simple and elegant round, "How great is the pleasure;" the humorous catch, "Old Thomas Day;" and the charming duet, "Sweet doth blush the rosy morning," have always enjoyed the greatest popularity.

The name of Dr. BENJAMIN COOKE deserves peculiar notice, not only from his eminence as a musician, but from his interesting character. The date of his birth is not recorded; but he was organist and master of the boys of Westminster Abbey about the year 1780, and died in 1793. The following pleasing particulars respecting this amiable man are taken from Miss Hawkins's *Anecdotes, Biographical Sketches, and Memoirs*.

"Everything agreeable is connected with the remembrance of Dr. Cooke. He was one of the worthiest

and best tempered men that ever existed; and though at an early period of life he had obtained a very high rank in his profession, he had escaped all the ills connected with music and prosperity. Being rather of a taciturn disposition in general society, or rather, I may say, too modest to enter into conversation unless called on, his peculiar talent for humour was not generally known, but it was genuine and of the best description.

“No one was ever less vain of superior excellence in an art, or rather, less sensible of it. He certainly supposed that everybody could do what he did ‘if they would but try;’ and he would lend his abilities to assist in the least ostentatious manner. When seated at the organ of Westminster Abbey, where, it will be acknowledged by his many still-existing scholars, no one excelled him in accompanying an anthem, he would press every hand that could be useful into his service; and, even at the risk of addressing himself to persons ignorant of the first principles of music, he would say to any lad who had strolled into the church and found his way up to the organ, ‘young gentleman, can’t you lend us a hand here?’ To his boys he would say, ‘come, come, don’t stand idle; put in one hand here, under my arm.’

“Dr. Cooke had married early, and was an excellent husband—had a large family, and was a most affectionate parent; so affectionate as, on the early death of a son, to be almost alarmingly grieved. His feelings, at all times, and in their natural state, were very tender. He would sing his part in the beautiful Scotch song, ‘Farewell to Lochaber,’ but never could do it without

the tears standing in his eyes. His cordiality, though it never led him into imprudence, was such as kept his door almost always open ; and many times have I seen him come home from business, when he had been waited for in his dining-parlour and study, and his drawing-room has received him into a circle, that has obliged him to make his hasty compliments all round. In the streets he was perpetually stopt ; it is impossible to describe the humour with which he would apologise for any delay in giving a lesson, which was, to do him justice, not frequent ; he had a peculiar action with his elbow while he was recovering his breath, and his fingers were unconsciously preluding the finest modulations on a keyed instrument ; and with a laugh that indicated some humorous recollection he would say, ‘I was just stopt a few times as I came along ;’ his patience with ignorance, and his liberality of time, more than atoned for five minutes waiting.

“As impossible is it to describe his humour in relating. My father* had made interest with him to instruct the son of a very worthy provincial organist ; and the tuition commenced. When the shake was to be acquired, the pupil, in his extreme attention, as he proceeded in this two-fingered manœuvre, gradually declined towards the ground on the right hand. As the seat for such a purpose is not generally of the most secure form or dimensions, Dr. Cooke warned the young man to keep steady, saying cheerfully, ‘Take care, take care ;’ but still the youth was too apt to be absorbed by his occupation. ‘At last,’ said the doctor, in relating it, ‘I thought, as I was near at hand in case

* Sir John Hawkins, the author of the *History of Music*.

of any disaster, it might cure him if for once I let him go ; and verily he went on, shake, shake, shake, till he and stool and all were close to my feet instead of my elbow.'—Another anecdote made us very merry. He was giving lessons on the violin to a young man of a noble family. The young man was beginning to play ; but, in the common impetuosity of a novice, he passed over all the rests, and, therefore, soon left his master far behind him. 'Stop, stop, sir,' said the doctor, 'just take me with you.' This was a very unpleasant check to one who fancied he was 'going on famously ;' and it required to be more than once enforced ; till at length it was necessary to argue the point, which the doctor did with his usual candour, representing the necessity of these observances. The pupil, instead of showing any sign of conviction, replied rather coarsely, 'Ay, ay, it may be necessary for you, who get your living by it, to mind such trifles, but *I* don't want to be so exact*.'"

In connexion with Dr. Cooke, Miss Hawkins mentions the earl of Sandwich, one of the most eminent dilettanti, as well as greatest statesman of his day, who indulged his taste for music at the time when he was discharging the then arduous duties of First Lord of

* This youth of quality was something like the country manager, who, observing one of the musicians in his orchestra sitting inactive during the rehearsal of an overture, called out to him to know why he was not playing. "I am *resting*, sir," said the performer. "Resting, sir !" exclaimed the manager in a rage—"what the d—, sir, do you think I am going to pay you for resting? Play on, sir,—no resting in *my* theatre !"

the Admiralty. "His lordship," says Miss Hawkins, "was one of those men of great business, and great men of business, who contrive to have leisure by never suffering arrears of labour to accumulate. He has been known to rise from table merely to answer a note from some mother anxious to hear of the safety of a son in the navy, and has been heard to say of himself, what he was well warranted in saying he believed few could boast, that he did not owe a letter to any one. Of his ability to attend to small things, as well as his disposition to be kind to those in the most lowly situations, I remember his giving a proof in his concerting with my father the means of relieving a man who had, I believe, once been prosperous in trade, but was then in want, and who had been a madrigal singer. 'He is,' said his lordship, 'a fit object for me to present as a pensioner to the Charter-house; the charity was intended for such men, not for our coachmen and footmen: I will make him comfortable;—and then, Sir John, we will have some madrigal-singing in his room.'" Every man of a really strong and active mind is able to find sufficient leisure for recreation, whatever may be his share in the serious business of life. The bow must not be always bent; and severe labour, whether of the body or the mind, must be relieved by ease and relaxation. When, therefore, we hear a man complain of the pressure of affairs, and lament his want of leisure to enjoy the pleasures of literature, music, painting, or any of the other elegant and liberal arts, we may safely conclude, either that he is a confused and inefficient man of business, or that he merely pretends to have a taste for refined and intellec-

tual pursuits while he really prefers frivolous, gross, and probably vicious amusements.

Dr. Cooke's glees are numerous, and of great beauty. They are remarkable for natural and graceful ease of melody, great simplicity and yet much art in the disposition of the parts, and fine expression. Among those which are most prized, are, "Hark, the lark at heaven's gate sings;" "How sleep the brave;" "In the merry month of May," which is in the style of the old Madrigal; "As now the shades of eve;" "I've been young, though now grown old," a Spartan war-song and chorus—a spirited and vigorous composition; and "Now the bright morning star, day's harbinger." One of his rounds, "Curst as the evil one is he," (a parody on the famous fragment of Sappho, "Blest as the immortal gods is he,") is a most ingenious and beautiful specimen of this kind of composition.

Dr. Cooke's son, ROBERT COOKE, was, like his father, organist of Westminster Abbey, and a very distinguished glee composer. He died in 1814. His most remarkable production is the "Invocation to Friendship," a glee for eight voices; in which eight real parts are treated with great skill and beautiful effect. Among the best of his other glees are, "Mark where the silver queen of night," "Why o'er the verdant banks," "Love and folly were at play," "Round thy pillow," and "Sweet warbling bird."

The earl of MORNINGTON, the father of the duke of Wellington, is the author of several of our most beautiful glees. He was born in 1720, and was remarkable, when a child, for his musical precocity, of which a number of instances are recorded by the Hon.

Daines Barrington. His father, who was a tolerable performer on the violin, used to amuse the child, then in his nurse's arms, by playing to him; and the boy took great delight in papa's fiddling. Dubourg, an eminent violinist of that day, being on a visit at the house, Mr. Wellesley was handing him his violin, but the child would not suffer him to take it till his little hands were held. After having heard Dubourg, however, there was still more difficulty in persuading him to let Dubourg return the violin to his father; and the child would never afterwards allow his father to play while Dubourg was in the house. Among Lord Mornington's compositions, the most popular are the glees, "Here in cool grot," "Gently hear me, charming maid," "Hail, hallowed fane," and "Come, fairest nymph." His catch, "'Twas you, sir," is very lively and amusing.

SAMUEL WEBBE was remarkable for his ardour in the pursuit of general knowledge, and his great attainments as a linguist. His life was equally interesting and exemplary. He was born in 1740. His father was a man of high respectability and independent fortune; but dying suddenly at Minorca, whither he had gone to take possession of an office under government, and the family property having been in some manner alienated from his descendants, his widow was so much reduced in circumstances, that his son received very little education, and was apprenticed to a cabinet-maker when he was only eleven years old. His disposition was averse, however, to so mechanical a calling, and he abandoned it as soon as he was released from his indentures. He applied himself to the study

of Latin ; but, his mother dying, he was left without support, and obliged to earn his livelihood by copying music, though as yet wholly unacquainted with the art. He acquired the rudiments of music from an obscure professor named Barbandt, with whom his occupation of a copyist had made him acquainted. At this time his industry was so unremitting that, when fully employed, he wrote from five in the morning till twelve at night. When he had any leisure he pursued the study of music ; and, having acquired a considerable knowledge of Latin, he set about the acquisition of French. He married at the age of three and twenty ; and the birth of a child added to his difficulties. His ardour for knowledge, however, seemed to increase with his embarrassments, and he began to take lessons in Italian. His knowledge of music now enabled him to exercise the profession of a teacher ; and his genius for composition soon gained him distinction. Scarcely a year passed without his obtaining a prize medal, and sometimes two, for his glees from the Catch Club, till the time that the practice of giving prizes was discontinued by that society. In addition to his previous attainments, he acquired an extensive knowledge of the Hebrew and German languages ; he excelled in the manly exercises and elegant accomplishments ; and his amiable and benevolent disposition endeared him to the circle in which he moved. In 1794 he was appointed secretary to the Noblemen and Gentlemen's Catch-Club, which situation he held till his death, in 1817. He is the author of above a hundred glees and part-songs, a great number of which are of the highest excellence. His "When winds breathe soft" is a

musical picture full of beauty, and of grandeur approaching the sublime. Among his other productions, "Hence all ye vain delights," "The mighty conqueror of hearts," "Discord, dire sister," "Glorious Apollo," "If love and all the world," "Thy voice, O harmony," "Come, live with me," "Swiftly o'er the mountain's brow," and the "Ode on St. Cecilia," may be considered the greatest, though there are many others hardly, if at all, inferior.

DR. CALLCOTT was born in 1766, and commenced his musical career at the age of eighteen, when he appeared as candidate for the prize given by the Catch-Club. In 1786, he was admitted an honorary member of that club; on which occasion he sent in, as a candidate for prizes, nearly a *hundred* compositions; a proceeding which produced the natural consequence of a resolution by the club limiting the number of compositions from any one candidate, to twelve. Callcott was rather unreasonably offended at this, and declined, for a time, to write for the club; but in 1782 he sent in twelve pieces, the full number allowed, and gained *all* the prizes of the year,—a circumstance unprecedented in the history of the club. From that time till 1793, when the Catch-Club ceased to give prizes, he continued regularly to send in compositions to the club, and gained a great number of medals.

In 1787, he joined Dr. Arnold and a number of gentlemen, both professional and amateurs, in founding the Glee-Club, which held its first meeting at the Newcastle Coffee-house, on the 22nd of December of that year.

In 1800 he obtained the degree of doctor of music,

at Oxford. Soon after this time, his strength, both of body and mind, began to give way under the excessive labour to which he subjected himself. He was not only an indefatigable composer, but an industrious teacher; and he had also engaged in preparing materials for a musical dictionary. Finding himself, however, unable to accomplish an undertaking of such magnitude, he wrote his *Musical Grammar*; a little work, in which the rudiments of music are clearly and judiciously expounded. This was his last work of any consequence. His faculties sank under such unremitting exertions; and he spent several years in a state of entire seclusion. His mind afterwards recovered its tone, and he was again able to mingle in society and resume his professional pursuits. But this lasted but a short while: he relapsed into mental imbecility, and died on the 15th of May, 1821.

A collection of Dr. Callcott's glees, catches, and canons, in two volumes, was published in 1824, by his son-in-law, Mr. Horsley, who has prefixed to it an ably written and very interesting sketch of the composer's life. This piece of musical biography is worthy of peculiar attention, not only on account of the subject, but of the author, who is himself one of the greatest ornaments of the English school, and who, besides being connected with Callcott by the ties of kindred, resembles him in the nature of his pursuits and the character of his genius.

In the unwearied activity of his mind, and his ardour in the pursuit of general knowledge, Dr. Callcott seems strongly to have resembled Mr. Webbe. "When scarcely more than fourteen years of age,"

Mr. Horsley says, "the passion for various pursuits for which he was afterwards so remarkable, showed itself strongly. His musical studies appear to have been conducted with almost unremitting diligence; yet at intervals he continued to improve himself in classical learning, and began to cultivate an acquaintance with the French and Italian languages. Indeed, to attain a general knowledge of languages was with him a great object at all times; and he was even induced to attempt the Hebrew and the Syriac. Algebra and mathematics also occupied his attention; and it is, perhaps, to the gratification which those studies afforded him, that we may attribute the taste for abstract musical science which he afterwards displayed."

His musical pursuits were at first of a varied kind, but he early devoted himself to the particular study of glee writing. Even when he had become one of the most popular glee composers of the day, he had acquired little skill in the management of an orchestra. "I have heard him relate," says Mr. Horsley, "that having, about this time, written a song with full accompaniments, he presented it to Stephen Storace, with a request that he would examine it, and draw his pencil through such parts as did not please him. Stephen, who was one of the most unceremonious of beings, looked over the score, then drawing his pencil through the whole, he thrust it into our author's hands, with the single exclamation,—'There!'"

Following his constant desire for improvement, he received some instructions from Haydn during that great master's residence in England. "It does not appear," Mr. Horsley says, "that he took many lessons

from Haydn: the numerous avocations which occupied him in turn, must have made it impossible for him to devote much time to any one branch of musical science. His efforts for general improvement were prodigious, even at this period of his life; and they excited the surprise and even the alarm of his friends; an alarm which eventually proved to be well-founded. His constitution, though not robust, was naturally good; but it was not in human strength to withstand the demands he made on it. He not only denied himself those intervals of relaxation which every one finds necessary, but even during his meals he was occupied in reading; and, what was still more detrimental to his health, he sought by various means to abridge his hours of sleep. Indeed, the time he allowed himself for repose was so exceedingly short, that, according to the opinion of a well-informed medical friend, it was of itself sufficient to lay the foundation of that irritability of the nervous system which subsequently produced such distressing consequences.

“It was while he received lessons from Haydn, that he composed his well-known scene from Thomson’s hymn, ‘These as they change.’ The accompaniments to the recitative in that scene are among his best instrumental productions, and prove the advantages he derived from studying under so profound a judge of orchestral effect. It was also, I think, from frequent conversations with that wonderful composer, and from a diligent consideration of some of his works, that my friend first became inclined to employ himself principally in compositions of a small number of parts. Whoever looks attentively over the scores of those

symphonies which Haydn wrote before his visit to this country, must observe, that the great effects produced by them are not at all dependant on complicated harmony. On the contrary, they must be pronounced *thin*, in comparison with the symphonies of Mozart or Beethoven: their charm, therefore, consists in the beauty of the cantilena, in the admirable conduct of the subject and modulation, and in the exquisite employment of every instrument introduced. Struck with this, Callcott conceived that the finest vocal compositions would be found in three, or at the most, four parts. In this opinion he was much confirmed by the success of his glees, 'Peace to the souls of the heroes,' 'Who comes so dark from ocean's roar?' 'The Friar of Orders Gray,' &c., and henceforward, with a very few exceptions, he confined himself to that number."

Mr. Horsley gives a pleasing account of the commencement of his intercourse with Dr. Callcott. Mr. Horsley, then a very young man, was organist of Ely Chapel, in Ely Place, Holborn. The churchwardens and overseers of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, after the unfortunate destruction of their own church, were in the habit of occasionally applying to the neighbouring clergy for the use of their churches or chapels, in which sermons were preached for the benefit of the poor children of St. Paul's parish, who, on these occasions, attended to sing. The use of Ely Chapel having been granted for this purpose, the young organist, who had long admired Callcott's compositions, and ardently desired to know him, learned that there was to be a sermon for the benefit of the schools of St. Paul's, and that Mr. Callcott would attend with the children to

practise:—"When the day arrived," says Mr. Horsley, "I went to the chapel before the hour appointed; the children were assembled, and my friend made his appearance soon after. I shall never forget the smile with which he received me; a smile peculiarly benevolent and encouraging, which will always be remembered by those who ever witnessed it. We had a long conversation together, during which he inquired in the kindest manner into the nature of my studies and professional views. He was much pleased to find that I had devoted myself to vocal composition, and gave me permission to send him some copies of a canzonet which I had then just published. We parted; and I, quite elated with such an acquisition to my acquaintance, hastened home to send him my song, which I accompanied with a laboured address. A simple and encouraging answer was soon returned, which concluded with an invitation to his house. This, it will be easily imagined, I was not slow to accept; and from that time a friendship was formed between us, which was afterwards drawn still closer by family ties, and remained undisturbed, even by a single accident, till it was terminated by the hand of death."

We have mentioned that Dr. Callcott's mental faculties gave way under the pressure of his excessive exertions; and that he spent some years in a state of total seclusion. The following is Mr. Horsley's touching account of the concluding period of his life.

"After an absence of more than five years, we again had the happiness to see him among us; altered indeed in some respects, yet still possessing those excellent and endearing qualities by which he had always been dis-

tinguished. As he seemed no longer to entertain those laborious designs which had before exhausted his bodily and mental energies, we flattered ourselves that we should long enjoy the delight of his society. This pleasing hope was encouraged by the steady manner in which he resumed his former occupation of teaching, and by the extraordinary care with which he avoided everything that could tend to produce irritability.

“These precautions had a beneficial result for more than three years : at the expiration of that time he was once more compelled to leave his home, to which he never again returned. In the spring of 1821 he was declared to be in imminent danger, and some of his nearest relatives immediately hastened to attend him. Soon after their arrival he expressed a wish to see me, and I instantly obeyed it. My appearance seemed to afford him much pleasure, and he even put forth his hand a second time to greet me. From this moment he had the consolation of being attended by some of those whom he had most loved, and it was plain that their attentions were a source of the greatest comfort to him. His mind was collected, though he laboured under a difficulty of speech, which rendered conversation with him exceedingly painful.

“The piety which had always marked his character through life, showed itself strongly as that life approached to a close ; and, like all other good men, he sought for the support which religion alone can give. One of his daughters frequently read prayers to him, and extracts from the Holy Scriptures ; and he was occasionally heard to repeat the poetry of his compositions which had any relation to his afflictions, or

which served in any degree to express the trust and confidence which he felt in the Almighty Disposer of events.

“From the commencement of that serious attack which summoned his family around him, no expectations were entertained of his recovery, and he died on Tuesday, the 15th of May, 1821, in the fifty-fifth year of his age. His remains were brought to Kensington, and privately interred in the church-yard of that place, on the 23rd of the same month.”

Nothing can be more beautiful than the picture which Mr. Horsley has drawn of the character of his distinguished relative; and its correctness is vouched by the esteem and affection in which he was held by his professional brethren and his numerous friends. “If Dr. Callecott,” says his biographer, “was entitled to our admiration as a musician, he had the strongest claim to our esteem and reverence as a man. By nature he was kind, gentle, and beneficent. He had no enemies—he could have none. Violent or malignant passions never found any place in his heart; but whenever troubled by the folly or indiscretion of mankind, his sentiments on the occasion were always those of one whose philosophy is exalted by Christianity. Although in possession himself of such extraordinary talents and acquirements, he delighted in the slightest exhibition of talent or acquirement in others, and was ready at all times to pour forth the copious streams of his knowledge for their assistance. Towards the younger members of his profession he was always most liberal; and there are several now living in great comfort and respectability, who are indebted for all they enjoy to the gratuitous assistance

which they received from Dr. Callcott. But the brightest part of my friend's character, that which gave beauty to all the rest, was his unfeigned piety : he was a Christian—and as a Christian he thought, and spake, and acted. Religion constantly furnished the rule of his conduct. It restrained him in the days of his prosperity ; it supported him when calamity came ; and it guided him to the ' haven of his rest.'

“ ‘ Behold the upright ; for the end of that man is peace.’ ”

Callcott divides with Webbe the claim to pre-eminence in the branch of the musical art to which they devoted themselves. Some of his glees are slight, and appear to have been hastily written ; others have been evidently produced when his imagination was not very active ; and there is a similarity in the construction of many of his compositions which approaches to mannerism. But all this must be the case with everyone who writes so much, and so rapidly, as Callcott has done. A great number of his glees, the produce of his happier moments, are worthy of all the admiration they have received ; and of the forty-eight glees selected by Mr. Horsley from among his voluminous works, in order to form the contents of the posthumous publication we have already mentioned, there is not one that does not bear the impress of the author's genius.

Dr. Callcott's masterpiece is undoubtedly the celebrated glee, “ O snatch me swift from these tempestuous scenes ; ” a composition, indeed, which probably has not been surpassed by any work of its class. In its lofty and devotional character it resembles Webbe's “ When winds breathe soft ; ” and there is a curious resemblance,

too, in the circumstances which gave rise to these two great productions. Webbe obtained the words of his glee, from happening, one morning, to look at the piece of paper which covered some article brought in by his servant from the grocer's shop; and the author of these magnificent words has never been known. Callcott found the words of "O snatch me swift" in an old volume of poems which he bought at a book-stall on his way to the theatre, in order to pass the time while waiting for the commencement of the play; and these beautiful but anonymous verses inspired the composer with his noblest conceptions. The whole of the glee is grand and impressive; and the fugue on two subjects with which it concludes, shows how, in the hands of genius, the resources of counterpoint can be made subservient to the purposes of effect and poetical expression. Besides this magnificent glee the following may be mentioned as possessing peculiar excellence: "Peace to the souls of the heroes," "Who comes so dark," "Queen of the valley," "The Red-cross knight," "In the lonely vale of streams," "Are the white hours for ever fled," "O voi che sospirate," "The Friar of Orders Gray," and "The May Fly." Dr. Callcott also composed two or three songs, or cantatas, with orchestral accompaniments; one of which, "These as they change," has already been mentioned, and his "Angel of life," written for the celebrated Bartleman, enjoyed unbounded popularity in the days of that unrivalled bass-singer, but has rarely been attempted by any of his successors.

Some beautiful glees were produced between thirty and forty years ago, by Mr. R. J. STEVENS, Gresham professor of music, and organist of the Charter-house.

Among these, the most remarkable are "Some of my heroes are low," "Ye spotted snakes," "It was a lover and his lass," "O mistress mine," "Crabbed age and youth," and "From Oberon in Fairy-land." These productions are exceedingly original, and indicative of a rich and poetical fancy*. Mr. STAFFORD SMITH, a pupil of Dr. Boyce, composed a number of fine glees, about the end of the last century. His "Return blest days," "While fools their time," and "Blest pair of sirens," will always hold a high place in English vocal music.

The reputation of the English school of voeal harmony is fully supported by the composers of the present day. Mr. HORSLEY, by his beautiful and classical productions has placed himself in the highest rank of glee writers. We have already seen that his attention, at an early period of life, was turned to vocal harmony. In the pursuit of his art he has evinced ardour and industry as well as genius; and his works form a greater and more important addition to the riches of this branch of English music than those of any other composer except his great precursors, Webbe and Callcott. His compositions indicate a profound knowledge of the principles of his art, and a complete command of its resourees;—a warm and poetical imagination, chastened by the utmost refinement of taste. In the

* On the death of Mr. Stevens, Mr. Edward Taylor has been lately elected Gresham Professor of Music, a situation which, from being a mere sinecure, he is rendering highly conducive to the benefit of the art. His three inaugural lectures, just published, contain a curious and interesting history of Gresham College, and a clear exposition of the principles which ought to regulate the method of every popular lecturer on music.

choice of his subjects he is uniformly guided by a classical and discriminating judgment, and thoroughly imbued with the spirit and feeling of his poetry. His vocal phrases, accordingly, are not more remarkable for their melodious flow and smoothness, than for their adaptation to the correct and expressive declamation of the words. Several of Mr. Horsley's glees have acquired a popularity which has never been surpassed. "By Celia's Arbour," "See the chariot at hand," and "Cold is Cadwallo's tongue," are well known to every glee-singer in the kingdom; but there are many others, which though less generally known than these, are in no respect inferior to them. Of this description are, "Lo, on yon long resounding shore," and "Awake my lyre," both for five voices; "Blow light, thou balmy air," "When the pale moon," "Forget me not," "Mine be a eot," and "Solo e pensoso," in the style of the Italian madrigal. Mr. Horsley's two collections of vocal canons contain many exquisite specimens of this class of composition, in all its varieties. To construct a canon, according to the strict rules laid down for it, even if compliance with these rules is the only point gained, is a work of difficulty and skill; and a familiarity with these rules, and readiness in using them, are of infinite value in every style of composition, however free. But a canon technically exact, and, at the same time, melodious, expressive, and moving without stiffness or apparent restraint, is a work of art, possessing beauties peculiar to itself, and beauties, too, which are felt by persons unacquainted with the mechanism which produces them. The beauty of the famous "Non nobis Domine," is derived from its technical construction—at

least, we know of no vocal composition, of similar dimensions, and in simple counterpoint, which approaches it in effect. Yet, among the multitudes, who, at our large public meetings, listen to its grand and solemn harmony as it peals round and round the hall, how many are there who can ascribe their feelings to its peculiar structure as a "Canon three in one?" Such are these canons of Mr. Horsley's. Their construction will gratify the admirer of learning and technical skill; while they will delight and affect every one who is capable of being "moved with concord of sweet sounds." In proof of this it is sufficient to refer to the last piece in the supplementary collection, "*Audivi vocem de cœlo*," a choral canon for four voices and on two subjects, composed on the death of a friend; a production of the most artificial contrivance, yet simple in its effect, and full of deep and pathetic expression.

Mr. W. BEALE, among other excellent works, has made one of the few successful attempts, in modern times, to compose a madrigal. His "*Awake sweet muse*," (which gained the prize cup given by the Madrigal Society, in 1813,) is worthy of the age of Elizabeth. Sir JOHN ROGERS, the present president of that society, and a *dilettante* of the highest attainments, has produced several admirable compositions in this style, which are full of invention and taste, and deeply imbued with the spirit of "the olden time." LORD BURGHESSE, who has distinguished himself as a composer in various styles, has written some good glees and other English vocal pieces. Mr. SAMUEL WEBBE, jun. Mr. Goss, organist of Chelsea, Mr. T. COOKE, director of the music of Drury-lane theatre, Mr. JOLLY, organist of

St. Peter's chapel, and Mr. WALMISLEY, organist of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, are the authors of many excellent glees. SIR JOHN STEVENSON was a voluminous and popular glee-writer; but his productions are of too flimsy a structure to be lasting.

The weight of the English school of dramatic music, since the beginning of the present century, has rested chiefly on the shoulders of Mr. BISHOP. From the death of Storace in 1796, to the commencement of Mr. Bishop's career, in 1806, the composers for the theatre were MAZZINGHI, REEVE, and BRAHAM. *Paul and Virginia*, *The Turnpike-gate*, and several other operas, were composed by Mazzinghi and Reeve jointly; and the most favourite pieces in *The Cabinet*, *The English Fleet*, *Kais*, and *The Devil's Bridge* were composed by Braham. These operas contained many elegant and pleasing airs, and were very popular for a time; but they were unable to supersede the works of Arne, Arnold, Storace, and Dibdin, which still keep their place as stock-pieces in all our theatres. Bishop's first productions at once established his reputation. During a period of above twenty years he produced, in rapid succession, a multitude of operas and other musical pieces, almost all of which were more or less successful and many of them eminently so. By adapting to the English stage Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and *Figaro*, and Rossini's *Barbiere di Siviglia*, he strengthened the growing taste for foreign dramatic music, and created that demand for Italian and German productions which ultimately injured his own popularity. His opera of *Aladdin*, which appeared at Drury-lane in 1826, at the same time that Weber's *Oberon* was brought out at

Covent Garden, proved unsuccessful. Since that time he has not produced any work of consequence; and a supply of musical pieces has been obtained chiefly by means of adaptations from the German and Italian stage.

The name of Bishop will always hold a high place in the history of English music; but his permanent fame will rest on his earlier works,—on *The Maniac*; *The Knight of Snowdon*; *The Virgin of the Sun*; *The Miller and his Men*; and *The Slave*. In these admirable operas we find pure, expressive, and forcible English melody, combined with the depth and solidity of the German school. They contain many scenes and concerted movements worthy of Mozart; and their rich and varied, yet chaste and unobtrusive, orchestral accompaniments, are in the style of that master. All Bishop's pieces, indeed, contain traits of genius, and passages worthy of a great artist; but, in many of them, these are very thinly scattered. In truth, he did injustice to his own fame by the excessive haste and rapidity with which he wrote. Holding the situation of composer and director of the music in Covent Garden theatre, he seems to have considered it his first duty to supply, as far as he could, the insatiable demand for novelty; and, for a succession of years, he produced five, six, seven, and eight musical pieces annually. Having thus tasked himself to write unceasingly, regardless of the will of Minerva, and without considering whether or not he was in the vein, it is not surprising that he should have filled his scores with crudities and common-places, alike unsatisfactory to the learned and unlearned. He thus lowered the character

of English music, more especially when contrasted with the works of Mozart, Rossini, Weber, Winter, Paër, and other foreign masters, with which the public was daily becoming better and better acquainted. Still, however, his early and classical works are a sufficient basis for a high and lasting reputation ; and, if the rich stores of the older English music are ever again resorted to, these works will not be overlooked.

Bishop is peculiarly successful in his concerted pieces. The beautiful and original quintet, "Blow, gentle gales," in *The Slave*, is still a favourite piece at our concerts ; and the gipsy chorus, "The Chough and Crow," in *Guy Mannering*, continues to enjoy undiminished popularity. We may also mention the rounds, "When the wind blows," and "Hark ! 'tis the Indian drum," as combining masterly contrivance with striking dramatic effect. The opening chorus in *The Maniac* ; the chorus, "Now to the forest we repair," in *The Miller and his Men* ; and the storm chorus in *The Virgin of the Sun* ; are magnificent specimens of Bishop's powers in this style of composition. Many of the songs and duets in his various operas are elegant and melodious ; but they are composed of less durable materials than his choral and concerted music.

There is some appearance of the English school of dramatic music being raised from its present state of depression. Mr. BARNETT'S opera of *The Mountain Sylph*, brought out in 1834 at the English Opera-house, has been performed, we believe, more than a hundred times, to crowded audiences. Mr. LODER'S *Nourjahad* also had a considerable run ; and Mr. THOMSON'S *Hermann*, though, in consequence of the faults of the

drama, and a very defective performance, it was less successful than these other pieces, was not inferior to them in musical merit.

More recently several operas of merit have been produced by different English composers; particularly *The Siege of Rochelle* and *The Maid of Artois* by Mr. BALFE; *Fair Rosamond* by Mr. BARNETT; *The Village Coquettes* and *The Barbers of Bassora* by Mr. HULLAH; and *Amilie* by Mr. ROOKE. All these pieces have been successful—some of them eminently so; and their merits, as well as their favourable reception, augur well for the fortunes of the English musical drama.

The system of adapting foreign operas to the English stage is still pursued; and we should be sorry to see it discontinued, were it carried on with judgment and discretion. Its effect has been to improve the public taste, and to stimulate our native artists to exertion. But the pieces recently introduced belong chiefly to the present degenerate Italian school: the managers of our theatres having been tempted by the applause which these pieces received at the Italian Opera-house, without considering that this applause was bestowed, not on the insipid music, but on the florid and brilliant execution of the Italian performers, which our singers (with one or two exceptions,) cannot imitate without making themselves ridiculous*. The success of these pieces, therefore, has by no means answered the expectations with which they were brought out; and thus the evil

* This is not said disparagingly. The art of embellishing an air with chaste and elegant ornaments is quite different from that of covering it all over with gaudy frippery, and is acquired by a very different course of study.

will probably bring its own remedy. It is common to accuse the English public of an unjust preference of foreign artists, to the neglect of native talent. We cannot discover any ground for this charge. We do not know an instance of a foreign opera, produced in an English dress, having gained unmerited popularity, or of an English opera having suffered unmerited neglect. The English public have naturally preferred masterly works, imported from abroad, to crude, hasty, and shallow pieces produced at home ; and now they show themselves equally ready to prefer an excellent opera of Barnett to a poor one of Mercadante. Let our dramatic composers study their art assiduously and deeply ; let them write with a view to permanent reputation as well as present gain ; and they will have nothing to fear from foreign rivals.

CHAPTER XXIII.

PRESENT STATE OF MUSIC IN ENGLAND.—THE PIANO-FORTE.—
 CLEMENTI. — CRAMER.—THE ORGAN.—COMPOSITION OF INSTRU-
 MENTAL MUSIC.—THE VIOLIN.—VOCAL PERFORMERS.—INSTITU-
 TIONS.—ANCIENT CONCERT.—PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.—VOCAL
 SOCIETY.—SOCIETY OF BRITISH MUSICIANS.—MUSICAL PUBLICA-
 TIONS.—CONCLUSION.

MR. JOHN CRAMER, in the preface to the last edition of his invaluable *Studio per il Piano-forte*, says, that “it is not unreasonable to suppose that our hereditary acquaintance with, and the frequent performances of, Handel’s works, have, in this country, offered an effectual resistance to the evil influence of the florid and vitiated style of the modern Italian school, which has been so unfortunately and perniciously diffused over the whole Continent; for nowhere are Handel’s works so well understood, and so well performed, as in England.” This remark, though expressed in general terms, is especially applicable to the subject of which the writer is treating,—the style of composition for, and performance on, the piano-forte; and it is gratifying to have such conclusive testimony to the superiority of English taste in this great branch of instrumental music.

The harpsichord, the precursor of the piano-forte, did not possess the powers, or attain the importance, of the latter instrument. There was little music written expressly for the harpsichord by composers of the first

class; and by them it was used as subsidiary to the organ. The first remarkable compositions for the harpsichord are those of FRESCOBALDI, who flourished about the middle of the seventeenth century, and who was also the greatest organist of his day. When we add to his pieces those of Domenico Scarlatti, Handel, Sebastian and Emanuel Bach, Paradies, and a few minor composers, we have all the harpsichord music, of any consequence, that preceded the time of the celebrated Clementi, the father of the piano-forte. As soon as it became known, its powers of *sostenuto* and expression, of which the harpsichord was destitute, led to the abandonment of that instrument.

MUZIO CLEMENTI was born at Rome in 1752. He was brought to this country when little more than a boy; and, having resided in England during almost the whole of his long life, may be looked upon as an English musician. He had made considerable proficiency in music before his arrival; but it was in this country that he prosecuted those studies which raised him to the summit of his art. He was indefatigable in the study of the works of Corelli, Alessandro and Domenico Scarlatti, Handel, and Sebastian Bach, and the harpsichord lessons of Paradies, then very popular in England. He became, by the common consent of the whole musical world, the greatest performer on the piano-forte of his time; and, though, in his latter years, he was rivalled by younger men, he has never yet been surpassed. Indeed, he may be said to be the founder of the modern school of the piano-forte, not only by means of the great players whom he has instructed, but by his works, which have been studied throughout

Europe. John Cramer, Field, of Petersburg, and several eminent foreign performers, were his pupils; and many of the first pianists of the age (including Beethoven himself) have acknowledged that they had, in a great measure, formed themselves on his works. Clementi died in 1833, full of years and honours, due not only to his exalted station as an artist, but to his high intellectual and moral qualities as a man.

Many eminent composers for and performers on the piano-forte have flourished in England since the commencement of the present century, whom our limits do not permit us to particularize. The most distinguished among them were DUSSEK, STEIBETT, WOELFL, and FIELD; all of whom have left many masterly and beautiful works which ought not to be neglected by the amateurs of this instrument.

Of JOHN BAPTIST CRAMER we have already had occasion to speak. He, too, though a foreigner by birth, is an English musician. He was brought to this country in his childhood, by his father, William Cramer, of Mannheim, the celebrated violinist, about the year 1772; and (with the exception of occasional visits to the Continent) lived constantly in England till the year 1835, when he retired from the exercise of his profession, and fixed his residence in Germany. He was a pupil of Clementi; but many of his peculiar beauties (in so far as they can be ascribed to anything but his own genius,) were derived from his assiduous study of the music of Mozart.

To the labours of Clementi and Cramer, aided by their younger coadjutor, Moscheles, must, in a great measure, be ascribed the comparative purity of the

English school of the piano-forte. Their admirable didactic works are a body of studies in which nothing is wanting that is requisite to form a finished player; and they all lay the foundation of their instructions in the works of the old masters. Students thus imbued with solid knowledge and good taste, are in little danger of being corrupted by the shallow and frivolous style which, springing from Vienna and Paris, is spreading itself over Europe. Our principal public performers, Mrs. ANDERSON, NEATE, POTTER, and BENNETT, and a great number of excellent teachers, not only in London, but all our principal towns, belong to the school of these great masters, and follow their footsteps in tuition. The florid and showy style, fashionable at Vienna and Paris, has its votaries here also; but their number is comparatively small, and does not seem to be increasing*.

The organ, the noblest of instruments, is successfully cultivated in England. Our organists rival those of Germany, and are very superior to those of any other country. The low state of the organ in France is admitted by French writers themselves; and the Italian organists profane their churches, and degrade the instrument, by playing upon it, by way of voluntaries, marches, waltzes, and overtures of operas. In England, the dignity of the organ has been sustained by the purity of our ecclesiastical school of music. Our chief composers for the church, down to the present day, have been masterly performers on the organ: and,

* The performances of THALBERG, displaying such wonderful powers of execution, and so much novelty of style, cannot fail to have an influence on the state of piano-forte playing in England.

owing to the example and influence of SAMUEL WESLEY, (the Sebastian Bach of the organ,) and other great organists of the metropolis, the cathedrals and churches, throughout the kingdom, are supplied with organists who are not only able performers, but sound and enlightened musicians. They are generally musical instructors; and it is owing to them that (as John Cramer has said) the works of Handel are nowhere so well understood and performed as in England.

The composition of instrumental music, either for a full orchestra, or in the form of concerted pieces for instruments, has not yet been successfully cultivated in England. We have no symphonies, quartets, or quintets, which can rival the works of the German school; and our dramatic composers, though some of them are able to employ the orchestra effectively as an accompaniment, hardly ever fail, in their overtures, to show their deficiency in instrumental composition. To excel in this branch of the art demands a depth and variety of knowledge, and a command of the resources of harmony, which, till very lately at least, has been unattainable by the imperfect means of education which England has furnished to musical students; and they have, moreover, to contend with the stupendous works of the German masters, the excellence of which appears to the public, as well as to themselves, to be unapproachable. This produces the double disadvantage of depressing their own energies, and of preventing their productions from having an indulgent, or perhaps even a fair, hearing. If a symphony, an overture, or a quartet, by a native aspirant for musical honours, is performed in public, the question ought to be, not

whether it is comparable to the works of Haydn, Mozart, or Beethoven, but whether it contains sufficient originality, ingenuity, learning, and beauty to please, in spite of the defects incident to youth and inexperience, and to give good assurance of future excellence. There is even more pleasure in listening to music of this description, and in contributing, by liberal approbation, to the encouragement of rising talent, than in enjoying the most consummate work of the greatest master. The most severe and captious criticism proceeds from inferior artists and superficial amateurs; while the most eminent and accomplished musicians show alacrity in discovering beauties, and in putting the kindest construction on the existence of faults. Our musical students have now the means of ample instruction; and its fruits are apparent in recent instrumental compositions of such merit as to show that their authors, if encouraged to persevere, are capable of raising the English school to distinction even in this arduous department of the art.

England has produced few great performers on the violin. The uninterrupted succession of great solo-players, from Italy, Germany, and France, appears to have prevented our countrymen from cultivating the violin further than as an orchestral instrument. Our only native violinist, of long established reputation as a concerto-player, is MORI, a pupil of Viotti, and one of the preservers of his pure and admirable school. As orchestral leaders, FRANCOIS CRAMER, WEICHEL, MORI, LODER of Bath, and T. COOKE, are also highly distinguished. Among our younger violinists, BLA-GROVE has acquired great reputation by his talents

both as a solo-player and a leader. As a violoncellist, LINDLEY has, for many years, been unrivalled for richness and beauty of tone, amazing power of execution, and skill and judgment as an orchestral player. In DRAGONETTI, we possess the greatest master of the double-bass that has ever existed; and in WILLMAN, COOKE, DENMAN, MACKINTOSH, HARPER, PLATT, CARD, and others, we have a body of performers, on wind instruments, not to be equalled in Europe.

It is a prevailing custom among foreigners, and too common among ourselves, to undervalue the English school of singing. It has already been seen, however, what was the opinion of the candid and liberal Weber on this subject; and it may be added, that the English singers, in general, have the advantage over the Italians, of being sound and accomplished musicians. Mrs. BILLINGTON was one of the finest performers on the piano-forte of her day; Mrs. DICKONS was remarkable, even in her childhood, for the manner in which she played the most difficult compositions of Bach and Handel; and Miss PATON (now Mrs. WOOD) had become a finished piano-forte player before she devoted herself to vocal music. BARTLEMAN, the greatest bass-singer that England has produced, owed much of the grandeur of his style to his profound knowledge of the most sublime compositions of every age and country. The wonderful versatility of BRAHAM, who is alike unrivalled in all descriptions of music, from the divine strains of Handel to a popular ballad, is derived from the extraordinary extent and depth of his musical learning. HORN is the author of many vocal pieces, remarkable not only for their beauty, but the masterly

style in which they are written. BELLAMY, VAUGHAN, KNYVETT, E. TAYLOR, HOBBS, HAWKINS, HORNCASTLE, SAPIO, PHILLIPS, SEGUIN, PARRY, MRS. KNYVETT, MADAME VESTRIS, MRS. SEGUIN, MISS MASSON, MISS CLARA NOVELLO, and MRS. BURNETT, are good musicians as well as excellent vocalists; and, indeed, there is scarcely one of our singers of any pretensions who would not be ashamed of the ignorance frequently betrayed by eminent Italian vocal performers. Since the retirement of Miss Stephens, and the absence of Mr. Braham and Mrs. Wood, our stage has been deficient in vocal strength; but it has been powerfully reinforced by the appearance of several young performers of great talent. Our present singers would be fully adequate, if united in one body, to the performance of the best and most arduous dramatic music; but they are divided among a number of theatres, not one of which, consequently, is able to get up an opera in a satisfactory manner. If we had in substance what we have in name—an English Opera-house—a theatre dedicated to the performance of the national musical drama, while the other theatres divided among themselves the other departments of the stage, we might expect not only to have operas, but every kind of dramatic entertainment, better performed than at present, when each theatre, endeavouring to grasp at everything, maintains a motley, but numerous and expensive company, whose strength can never be brought into combined action, and the separate sections of which are incompetent to do anything well.

The principal institutions in London for the advancement of music are, the Concert of Ancient Music, the

Philharmonic Society, the Royal Academy of Music, the Vocal Society, and the Society of British Musicians.

The CONCERT OF ANCIENT MUSIC was established in the year 1776, for the purpose of preserving, by means of regular performance, the great works of the older masters, which might otherwise, through the desire of novelty, be allowed to fall into oblivion. This institution is under the immediate direction of a body of noblemen, and has always engaged the highest patronage, which, upon the whole, it has merited. The orchestra, vocal and instrumental, embraces the greatest talent that can be obtained; and some of the magnificent compositions of the last two centuries are heard at these concerts in all their grandeur. But their management has been charged with want of energy, activity, and research in bringing to light the innumerable gems that lie hid in the vast stores of ancient music. This charge, however, seems applicable to the past rather than the present conduct of this noble institution.

The PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY was established in 1813, by a number of the most eminent members of the musical profession, for the improvement of the highest class of instrumental music, by means of the study, and public performance, of the symphonies, overtures, quartets, and other concerted instrumental pieces of the greatest masters. It is a law of this society that the profits derived from its concerts shall be applied to the purposes for which the institution was formed, and never to the personal emolument of the members. Vocal music forms a part of the concerts, not as belonging to the objects of the institution, but as being necessary to make them attractive to a public audience.

The society is carried on with great spirit and success. It has formed an orchestra, comprising a splendid assemblage of talent, and universally admitted to be at least equal, if not superior, to any orchestra in Europe; and it has created a taste for the great symphonies, and other instrumental works of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Cherubini, Spohr, &c., which were previously unknown in England.

The ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC, formed upon the plan of the British Institution for the encouragement of Painting, was established in 1823, with the object of promoting the cultivation of music among the natives of this country, and of affording the means of complete instruction in the art to a limited number of pupils. The regular students (who, before being admitted, must show some aptitude for music,) board in the house of the institution, and, besides their musical tuition, receive instructions in some of the more essential branches of general education. There are also extra students, who do not board in the house, and pay for their tuition according to a higher rate than the regular students. This institution has been successfully and beneficially conducted. Several of the original students have already attained very great distinction in their profession; and, from the talent exhibited at the public concerts of the academy, there is every reason to believe that some of the present pupils will do honour to their *alma mater*. The pieces performed at these concerts seem to indicate a somewhat exclusive preference of theatrical music and of the foreign schools; though it must be considered that music chosen with the view of attracting an audience, does not, perhaps, give a

just idea of the private studies and practice of the pupils. The musical world is indebted to Lord Burgersh, not only for the formation of the Royal Academy, but for his constant and zealous attention to its interests.

The VOCAL SOCIETY, founded in 1832, is an association of the most eminent vocal performers in the metropolis, for the cultivation of vocal music. They admit music of every denomination, whether ancient or modern, sacred or secular, foreign or English, provided it is of a high degree of excellence; and bestow the utmost care upon the correctness and purity of its performance. As might be expected, they give peculiar attention to some branches of music which have experienced unmerited neglect, particularly the madrigals of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the works of Purcell and other old English masters. The concerts of this society afford a most classical and elegant entertainment, and have already had a beneficial influence on the public taste.

The SOCIETY OF BRITISH MUSICIANS was established in 1834. Its object is the advancement of native talent in composition and performance; and its prospectus thus states the views with which it has been formed:—

“In an age like the present, so zealous in exertions for the advancement of the liberal arts and sciences, and in a metropolis so abundant in institutions to promote that desirable object, it is an extraordinary fact, that British music alone has escaped attention,—British musicians alone have hitherto been destitute of the advantages such institutions are calculated to afford.

While the Royal Academy of Arts, and various other establishments, have shed their fostering influence on painting, sculpture, and their tributary arts, the British musician has been left to his unaided endeavours to combat the unjust prejudices of the unthinking, and to compete with the composers of Continental Europe, provided as they are with every assistance necessary for the development of their genius and the display of their talents. The overwhelming preponderance of foreign compositions in all musical performances, while it can scarcely fail to impress the public with the idea that musical genius is an alien to this country, tends also to repress those energies, and to extinguish that emulation in the breast of the youthful aspirant, which alone lead to pre-eminence. With a view to supply this deficiency in our public institutions, to encourage the cultivation of the higher branches of the art and science of music, and to rescue merit from obscurity, by affording to all British musicians the means of improvement and publicity,—this Society has been established."

A society with such objects as these cannot fail to have the best wishes of every lover of British music. Its concerts have exhibited proofs of considerable, indeed, in some instances, great, talent among the members. The policy of excluding from the society all musicians but *natives* of Great Britain, and from its concerts all music but the compositions of its members, seems, at least, questionable. But the *working* of the institution will, in time, show the tendencies of its regulations; and where errors are found to have been committed, they will doubtless be corrected.

The improvement of music, in all its branches, is

much promoted by numberless societies, clubs, and other associations of a private nature, both in the metropolis and the provinces. These form a bond of union, mutually advantageous, between the professional musicians and the amateurs, by establishing among them a social intercourse, and combining them for an object equally interesting to all,—the cultivation of the art to which they are all attached.

An effect of this improvement, and, at the same time, a cause of its further progress, is the increased stimulus which it has given to the publication of valuable and important musical works. The splendid publications of Mr. Novello, particularly his great selection from the ecclesiastical works of the old Italian masters, published under the title of *The Fitzwilliam Music*, his collections of the masses of Haydn and Mozart, and his voluminous edition of the works of Purcell, are evidences, not only of the zeal and talent of this eminent musician, but of a degree of enterprise which would have exceeded the bounds of prudence, unless warranted by the spirit of the time. The recent edition of *The Messiah*, in full score, including the additional accompaniments of Mozart, and of some of Handel's other works; Mr. Edward Taylor's English editions of *The Last Judgment* and *The Crucifixion*, of Spohr; the new and improved edition of *The Creation*, lately produced under the superintendence of Neukomm; the publication of that composer's oratorios of *Mount Sinai* and *David*,—and of Mendelssohn's *St. Paul*; the translation of the theoretical works of Albrechtsberger; and the fine edition of the works of Beethoven now in progress under the superintendence of Moscheles,—form but a part of the works of magni-

tude which have appeared within these very few years. *The Harmonicon*, a monthly journal, commenced in 1823, and continued for ten years, has contributed greatly to the diffusion of musical taste and knowledge, and forms a record of the present state of music throughout the world, which will be of the utmost value hereafter to historians, and other writers on the art. It was succeeded by *The Musical Library*, which, for some time, furnished the public with a monthly selection of the most classical compositions of every school, with the musical intelligence of the day, and much sound and judicious criticism. *The Musical World*, a weekly journal recently established, is calculated, from the cheapness of its form, to draw increased attention to musical matters.

The diffusion of a taste for music, and the increasing elevation of its character, may be regarded as a national blessing. The tendency of music is to soften and purify the mind. The cultivation of a musical taste furnishes to the rich a refined and intellectual pursuit, which excludes the indulgence of frivolous and vicious amusements, and to the poor, a "*laborum dulce lenimen*," a relaxation from toil more attractive than the haunts of intemperance. All music of an elevated character is calculated to produce such effects; but it is to sacred music, above all, that they are to be ascribed. Music may sometimes be the handmaid of debauchery; but this music never can. Bacchanalian songs and glees may heighten the riot of a dissolute party; but that man must be profligate beyond conception, whose mind can entertain gross propensities while the words of inspiration, clothed with the sounds of Handel, are in

his ears. In the densely peopled manufacturing districts of Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Derbyshire, music is cultivated among the working classes to an extent unparalleled in any other part of the kingdom. Every town has its choral society, supported by the amateurs of the place and its neighbourhood, where the sacred works of Handel and the more modern masters are performed with precision and effect by a vocal and instrumental orchestra consisting of mechanics and work people ; and every village church has its occasional holiday oratorio, where a well-chosen and well-performed selection of sacred music is listened to by a decent and attentive audience of the same class as the performers, mingled with their employers and their families. Hence the practice of this music is an ordinary domestic and social recreation among the working classes of these districts ; and its influence is of the most salutary kind. The people, in their manners and usages, retain much of the simplicity of "the olden time ;" the spirit of industrious independence maintains its ground among them, and they preserve much of their religious feelings and domestic affections, in spite of the demoralizing effects of a crowded population, fluctuating employment, and pauperism. Their employers promote and encourage so salutary a recreation, by countenancing and contributing to pay the expenses of their musical associations ; and some great manufacturers provide regular musical instruction for such of their work-people as show a disposition for it. "It is earnestly to be wished," says a late writer, "that such an example were generally followed, in establishments where great numbers of people are employed. Wherever the working

classes are taught to prefer the pleasures of intellect, and even of taste, to the gratification of sense, a great and favourable change takes place in their character and manners. They are no longer driven by mere vacuity of mind to the beer-shop ; and a pastime, which opens their minds to the impressions produced by the strains of Handel and Haydn, combined with the inspired poetry of the Scriptures, becomes something infinitely better than the amusement of an idle hour. Sentiments are awakened which make them love their families and their homes ; their wages are not squandered in intemperance ; and they become happier as well as better."

In every class of society the influence of music is salutary. Intemperance may be rendered more riotous and more vicious by the excitement of loose and profane songs, and music may be an auxiliary to the meretricious blandishments of the stage. But the best gifts of nature and art may be turned to instruments of evil ; and music, innocent in itself, is merely abused when it is conjoined with immoral poetry and the allurements of pleasure. "Music," says Burney, "may be applied to licentious poetry ; but the poetry then corrupts the music, not the music the poetry. It has often regulated the movements of lascivious dances ; but such airs heard, for the first time without the song or dance, could convey no impure ideas to an innocent imagination : so that Montesquieu's assertion is still in force, that 'Music is the only one of all the arts which does not corrupt the mind.'"

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

THE USE AND ABUSE OF IMITATION IN MUSIC.

[The following observations are extracted from AVISON's *Essay on Musical Expression*, a work which is now in few hands. Being founded on the immutable principles of taste, they are applicable to the music of all ages and countries, and have, therefore, lost none of their value and interest by the lapse of nearly a century. The whole work may still be perused with much advantage by the musical student.]

EXPRESSION in music arises from a combination of air and harmony and is no other than a strong and proper application of them to the intended subject.

From this definition it will plainly appear, that air and harmony are never to be deserted for the sake of expression: because expression is founded on them. And if we should attempt anything in defiance of these, it would cease to be musical expression. Still less can the horrid dissonance of eat-calls deserve this appellation, though the expression or imitation be ever so strong and natural.

And, as dissonance and shocking sounds cannot be called musical expression; so neither do I think, can mere imitation of several other things be entitled to

this name, which, however, among the generality of mankind hath often obtained it. Thus the gradual rising or falling of the notes in a long succession, is often used to denote ascent or descent, broken intervals, to denote an interrupted motion, a number of quick divisions, to describe swiftness or flying, sounds resembling laughter, to describe laughter; with a number of other contrivances of a parallel kind, which it is needless here to mention. Now all these I should choose to style imitation, rather than expression; because, it seems to me, that their tendency is rather to fix the hearer's attention on the similitude between the sounds and the things which they describe, and thereby to excite a reflex act of the understanding, than to affect the heart and raise the passions of the soul.

Here then we see a defect or impropriety, similar to those which have been above observed to arise from a too particular attachment either to the modulation or harmony. For, as in the first case, the master often attaches himself so strongly to the beauty of air or modulation, as to neglect the harmony; and in the second case, pursues his harmony or fugues so as to destroy the beauty of modulation; so in this third case, for the sake of a forced, and (if I may so speak) an unmeaning imitation, he neglects both air and harmony, on which alone true musical expression can be founded.

This distinction seems more worthy our notice at present, because some very eminent composers have attached themselves chiefly to the method here mentioned; and seem to think they have exhausted all the

depths of expression, by a dexterous imitation of the meaning of a few particular words, that occur in the hymns or songs which they set to music. Thus, were one of these gentlemen to express the following words of Milton:

Their songs

Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to heaven.

It is highly probable, that upon the word divide, he would run a division of half a dozen bars; and on the subsequent part of the sentence, he would not think he had done the poet justice, or risen to that height of sublimity which he ought to express, till he had climbed up to the very top of his instrument, or at least as far as a human voice could follow him. And this would pass with a great part of mankind for musical expression, instead of that noble mixture of solemn airs and various harmony, which, indeed, elevates our thoughts, and gives that exquisite pleasure, which none but true lovers of harmony can feel.

Were it necessary, I might easily prove, upon general principles, that what I now advance concerning musical imitation is strictly just; both, because music as an imitative art has very confined powers, and because, when it is an ally to poetry (which it ought always to be when it exerts its mimetic faculty) it obtains its end by raising correspondent affections in the soul with those which ought to result from the genius of the poem. But I shall refer my reader, and content myself, in this place, with adding two or three practical observations by way of corollary to this theory.

1st. As music passing to the mind through the organ of the ear, can imitate only by sounds and

motions, it seems reasonable, that when sounds only are the objects of imitation, the composer ought to throw the mimetic part entirely amongst the accompanying instruments; because, it is probable, that the imitation will be too powerful in the voice which ought to be engaged in expression alone; or, in other words, in raising correspondent affections with the part*. Indeed, in some cases, expression will coincide with imitation, and may then be admitted universally: as in such chromatic strains as are mimetic of the grief and anguish of the human voice†. But to the imitation of sounds in the natural or inanimate world‡, this, I believe, may be applied as a general rule.

2ndly. When music imitates motions, the rhythm, and cast of the air, will generally require, that both

* I cannot bring a finer illustration of my meaning, than from the old song in *Acis and Galatea*.

Hush ye pretty warbling quire,
Your thrilling strains
Awake my pains,
And kindle soft desire, &c.

Here the great composer has very judiciously employed the vocal part in the nobler office of expressing, with pathos, the plaintive turn of the words, while the symphony and accompaniment very cheerfully imitate the singing of the warbling quire. But had Mr. Handel admitted this imitation of sound into the vocal part, and made it imitate the thrilling strains of the birds by warbling divisions, it is manifest the expression would have been much injured; whereas, according to his management of it, the imitation greatly assists the expression.

† As for example, the chorus of *Baal's Priests* in *Deborah*, "Doleful tidings how ye wound."

‡ Such as the noise of animals, the roar of thunder, ocean, &c. The murmur of streams.

the vocal and instrumental parts coincide in their imitation. But then, be it observed, that the composer ought always to be more cautious and reserved when he applies this faculty of music to motion, than when he applies it to sound, and the reason is obvious; the intervals in music are not so strictly similar to animate or inanimate motions, as its tones are to animate or inanimate sounds. Notes ascending or descending by large intervals, are not so like the stalking of a giant*, as a flow of even notes are to the

* A passage in *Acis and Galatea*, "See what ample strides he takes," has been quoted as imitative of the *Walk of Polypheme*; but, I apprehend, the majesty of that air rather affected him by an association of ideas, than any great similarity in the imitation.

An association of this kind, seems to have struck the author of the *Paralele des Italiens et des François en ce qui regarde la Musique*, "Pour la conformité (says he) de l'Air, avec le sens des paroles, je n'ai jamais rien entendu, en matière de symphonies, de comparable a celle qui fut exécutée à Rome, à l'Oratoire de S. Jérôme de la Charité, le jour de la Saint Martin de l'année 1697, sur ces deux mots, mille saette, mille flèches: c'étoit un air dont les notes étoient pointées à la manière des Giges; le caractère de cet air imprimoit si vivement dans l'ame l'idée de fleche; et la force de cette idée seduisoit tellement l'imagination, que chaque violon paroissoit être un arc; et tous les archets, autant de flèches décochées, dont les pointes sembloient darder la symphonie de toutes parts; on ne sauroit entendre rien de plus ingenieux et de plus heureusement exprimé."

We may learn from this, how far musical imitation, simply considered, may amuse the fancy of many who are less susceptible of the more delicate and refined beauties of expression.—The particular felicity of the Frenchman, in the musical performance here described, seems to have depended on this similitude, viz.: that every violin appeared as a bow, and all the bows, like so

murmuring of a stream* ; and little jiggish slurs are many arrows shot off, the points of which, seemed to dart the symphony through all its parts. Perhaps, so far as imitation was necessary, his observation might be just. But were this an argument, that the business of imitation was superior to every other in musical composition, it would reduce the noblest species of it, still lower than the extravaganzi of the instrumental performances which we have noted in the chapter on modulation.

* Here let me quote with pleasure, the air which Mr. Handel has adapted to those charming words of Milton.

Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee, with honied thigh,
At her flow'ry work does sing,
And the waters murmuring ;
With such concert as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feather'd sleep.
And let some strange mysterious dream,
Wave at his wings in airy stream
Of lively portraiture display'd,
Softly on my eyelids laid.
Then, as I wake, sweet music breathe,
Above, about, and underneath ;
Sent by some spirit, to mortals good,
Or th' unseen genius of the wood.

Here the air and the symphony delightfully imitate the humming of the bees, the murmuring of the waters, and express the ideas of quiet and slumber ; but what, above all, demands this eulogium, is the master-stroke of accompanying the voice with trebles and tenors, only when he comes to these words, "Then, as I wake, sweet music breathe," where the bass begins with an effect that can be felt only, and not expressed.

I have chosen to give all my illustrations on this matter from the works of Mr. Handel, because no one has exercised his talent more universally, and because these instances must also be most universally understood.

less like the nod of Alexander*, than certain shakes and trills are to the voice of the nightingale†.

3rdly. As music can only imitate motions and sounds, and the motions only imperfectly; it will follow, that musical imitation ought never to be employed in representing objects, of which motion or sound are not the principal constituents. Thus, to light, or lightning, we annex the property of celerity of motion; yet, it will not follow from thence, that an extremely swift progression of notes will raise the idea of either one or the other; because, as we said, the imitation must be, in these cases, very partial‡. Again, it is one property of frost to make persons shake and tremble; yet, a tremulous movement of semitones, will never give the true idea of frost: though, perhaps, they may of a trembling person.

4thly. As the aim of music is to affect the passions

* With ravish'd ears,
The monarch hears,
Assumes the God,
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.

In which air I am sorry to observe, that the affectation of imitating this nod, has reduced the music as much below the dignity of the words, as Alexander's nod was beneath that of Homer's *Jupiter*.

† Vide Il Penseroso.

Sweet bird that shuns the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy.

‡ What shall we say to excuse this same great composer who, in his oratorio of *Joshua*, condescended to amuse the vulgar part of his audience, by letting them hear the sun stand still.

in a pleasing manner, and as it uses melody and harmony to obtain that end, its imitation must never be employed on ungraceful motions, or disagreeable sounds; because, in the one case, it must injure the melody of the air, and in the other, the harmony of the accompaniment; and, in both cases, must lose its intent of affecting the passions pleasingly.

5thly. As imitation is only so far of use in music, as when it aids the expression; as it is only analogous to poetic imitation, when poetry imitates through mere natural media, so it should only be employed in the same manner. To make the sound echo to the sense in descriptive lyric, and, perhaps, in the cooler parts of epic poetry is often a great beauty; but, should the tragic poet labour at showing this art in his most distressful speeches; I suppose he would rather flatten than inspirit his drama: in like manner, the musical composer, who catches at every particular* epithet or metaphor that the part affords him, to show his imitative power, will never fail to hurt the true aim of his composition, and will always prove the more deficient in proportion as his author is more pathetic or sublime.

What then is the composer, who would aim at true musical expression, to perform? I answer, he is to blend such an happy mixture of air and harmony, as will affect us most strongly with the passions or affections which the poet intends to raise: and that, on this account, he is not principally to dwell on particular words in the way of imitation, but to comprehend the

* To give but one instance, how many composers hath the single epithet, "warbling," misled from the true road of expression, like an *ignis fatuus*, and bemired them in a pun?

poet's general drift or intention, and on this to form his airs and harmony, either by imitation (so far as imitation may be proper to this end) or by any other means. But this I must still add, that if he attempts to raise the passions by imitation, it must be such a temperate and chastised imitation, as rather brings the object before the hearer, than such an one as induces him to form a comparison between the object and the sound. For, in this last case, his attention will be turned entirely on the composer's art, which must effectually check the passion. The power of music is, in this respect, parallel to the power of eloquence: if it works at all, it must work in a secret and unsuspected manner. In either case, a pompous display of art will destroy its own intentions; on which account, one of the best general rules, perhaps, that can be given for musical expression, is that which gives rise to the pathetic in every other art, an unaffected strain of nature and simplicity*.

* Whatever the state of music may have been among the ancient Greeks, &c., or whether it was actually capable of producing those wonderful effects related of it, we cannot absolutely determine; seeing all the uses of their enharmonic scale are totally lost; and of their musical characters, which should have conveyed to us their art, slender traces are anywhere to be found. From the structure of their instruments, we cannot form any vast ideas of their powers. They seem to have been far inferior to those in use at present; but which, indeed, being capable of as much execution as expression, are only rendered more liable to be abused. Thus, the too great compass of our modern instruments, tempting as well the composer as performer, to exceed the natural bounds of harmony, may be one reason why some

authors have so warmly espoused the cause of the ancient music, and run down that of the modern.

I believe we may justly conclude, that the force and beauties of the ancient music did not consist so much in artful compositions, or in any superiority of execution in the performance, as in the pure simplicity of its melody ; which being performed in unison, by their vast choruses of voices and instruments, no wonder the most prodigious effects were produced. Since the time of Guido Aretino, the laws and principles of harmony have been considerably enlarged, and by rendering this art more intricate and complex, have deprived it of those plain, though striking beauties, which, probably, almost every hearer could distinguish and admire. And, I don't know whether this will not go some way, towards determining the dispute concerning the superior excellency of ancient and modern music. It is to be observed, that the ancients, when they speak of its marvellous effects, generally consider it as an adjunct to poetry. Now, an art in its progress to its own absolute perfection, may arrive at some intermediate point, which is its point of perfection, considered as an art joined to another art ; but not to its own, when taken separately. If the ancients, therefore, carried melody to its highest perfection, it is probable they pushed the musical art as far as it would go, considered as an adjunct to poetry ; but harmony is the perfection of music, as a single science. Hence then we may determine the specific difference between the ancient and modern compositions, and consequently their excellency.

THE PROPER PERFORMANCE OF CHURCH MUSIC*.

[From AVISON's *Essay on Musical Expression*.]

WE seem at present almost to have forgot that devotion is the original and proper end of our church music. Hence that ill-timed levity of air in our modern anthems, that foolish pride of execution in our voluntaries, which disgusts every rational hearer, and dissipates, instead of heightning true devotion.

If our organist is a lover of poetry, without which, we may dispute his love for music; or indeed, if he has any well-directed passions at all, he cannot but feel some elevation of mind, when he hears the psalm preceding his voluntary, pronounced in an awful and pathetic strain. It is then he must join his part, and with some solemn air, relieve, with religious cheerfulness, the calm and well-disposed heart. Yet, if he feels not this divine energy in his own breast, it will prove but a fruitless attempt to raise it in that of others; nor can we hope to throw out those happy instantaneous thoughts, which sometimes far exceed the best concerted compositions, and which, the enraptured performer would often gladly secure to his future use and pleasure, did they not as fleetly escape as they arise. He should also be extremely cautious of imitating common songs or airs, in the subjects of this latter kind of performance; otherwise he will but too much expose religion to contempt and ridicule.

It may not derogate from our subject of church

* See pages 56 and 89 of this volume.

music, just to mention the present method of singing the common psalm tunes in the parochial service, which are everywhere sung without the least regard to time or measure, by drawling out every note to an unlimited length. It is evident, that both the common and proper tunes were originally intended to be sung in the alla-breve time, or the regular pointing of two, three, or four minims in a bar: a kind of movement, which every ear, with the least practice, may easily attain; nor when they are sung in parts, should there be any more than three, *i. e.* one treble, tenor, and bass; as too complex an harmony would destroy their natural air. And, in this style, our psalm tunes are capable of all the solemnity that can be required from such plain and unadorned harmony*.

Whoever has heard the Protestant congregations abroad, sing, in parts, their psalms or hymns, may

* The pious and ingenious Mr. Watts, in his preface to his translation of the psalms, very justly laments this miserable drawling out the psalm. His remarks on this head so aptly coincide with the subject in question, that I shall here transcribe them.

“It were to be wished, that all congregations and private families would sing as they do in foreign Protestant churches, without reading line by line. It were to be wished also, that we might not dwell so long upon every single note, and produce the syllables to such a tiresome extent, with a constant uniformity of time; which disgraces the music, and puts the congregation quite out of breath; whereas, if the method of singing were but reformed to a greater speed of pronunciation, we might often enjoy the pleasure of a longer psalm, with less expense of time and breath; and our psalmody would be more agreeable to that of the ancient churches, more intelligible to others, and more delightful to ourselves.”

recollect, with some pleasure, that part of their religious worship; and their exceeding us so far in a performance of this kind, is chiefly owing to the exact measure in which those tunes are sung, and not to their harmony; for the greatest part of our own, which were composed soon after the Reformation, by those excellent masters we had at that time, would doubtless be found, as well in regard to their solemn air, as harmony, equal, if not superior, to any compositions of their kind. And we may further observe, that air is, in a higher degree, productive of both solemnity and cheerfulness, than harmony; for there is a dignity and grace in the former, when invented by genius, which a masterly harmony may indeed assist, but can never produce.

However trifling it may appear to consider this species of music, I cannot but own, that I have been uncommonly affected with hearing some thousands of voices hymning the Deity in a style of harmony adapted to that awful occasion. But sorry I am to observe, that the chief performer in this kind of noble chorus, is too often so fond of his own conceits; that with his absurd graces, and tedious, and ill-connected interludes, he misleads or confounds his congregation, instead of being the rational guide and director of the whole.

It may be thought, perhaps, by thus depriving our organist of this public opportunity of showing his dexterity, both in his voluntary and psalm tune, that all performers indiscriminately, might be capable of doing the duty here required; but it will be found no such easy matter to strike out the true sublimity of

style, which is proper to be heard, when the mind is in a devout state ; or, when we would be greatly solemn, to avoid the heavy and spiritless manner, which, instead of calmly relieving and lifting up the heart, rather sinks it into a state of deprivation.

If it should be asked, who are the proper persons to begin a reform in our church music ? It may be answered, the organists of cathedrals, who are, or ought to be, our *maestri di capella*, and by whom, under the influence and protection of their deans, much might be done to the advancement of their choirs ; nor would they find any difficulty in accomplishing this useful design, as there are many precedents to direct them, both from Dr. Aldridge and others, who have introduced into their service the celebrated Palestrina and Carissimi with great success. And if this method, when so little good music was to be had, hath been found to advance the dignity and reputation of our cathedral service ; how much more may be expected at this time, from the number and variety of those excellent compositions that have since appeared ; and which may be easily procured and adapted to the purposes here mentioned.

Thus, and thus alone, can we hope to reach any tolerable degree of excellence in the nobler kinds of musical composition. The works of the greatest masters are the only schools where we may see, and from whence we may draw, perfection.

THE END.

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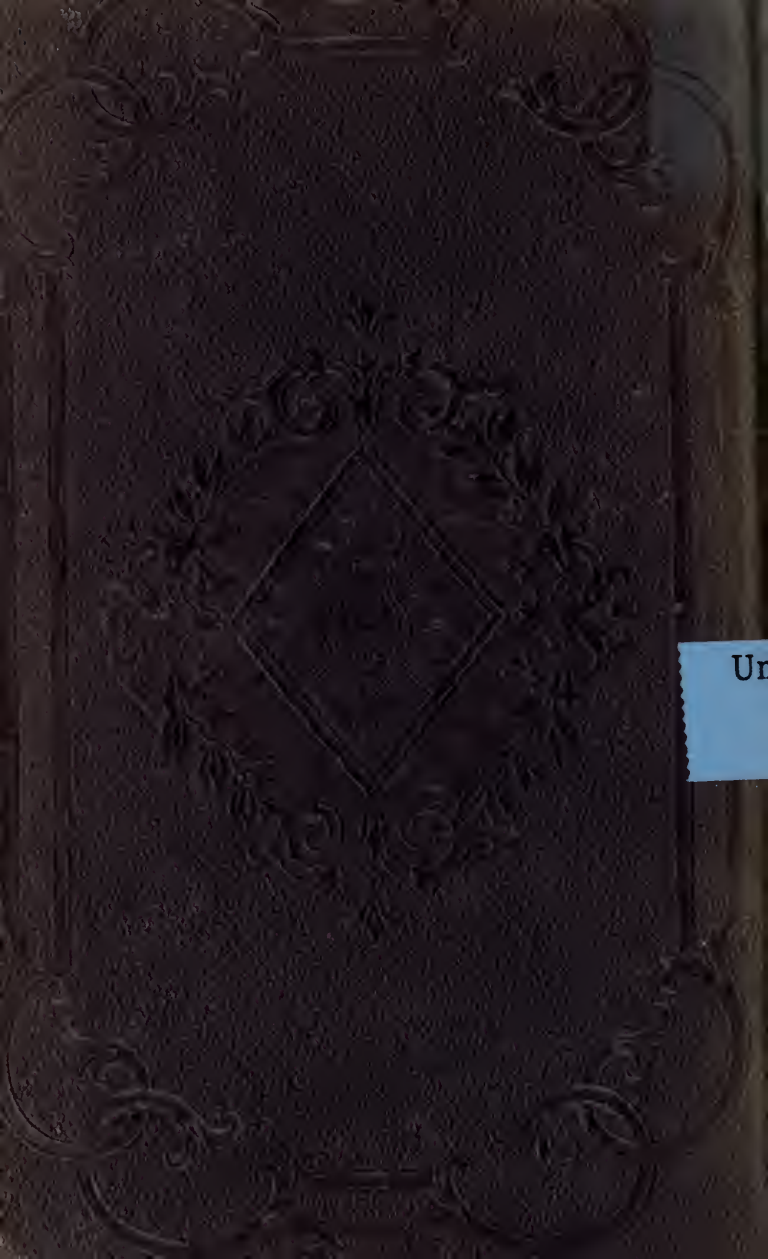
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